

MILITARY ILLUSTRATION

□ PAST & PRESENT

No. 23
February/
March 1990

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**'Time Machine':
Military Figures
Cast From Life**

**Medieval
King's Helmet
Restored**

**Boer Uniforms,
1899-1902**

**Dien Bien Phu,
1954: Infantry
Uniforms**

Crimea Guardsman, 1854-56

Crockett at the Alamo, 1836



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Our cover illustration shows the new 1918 Tommy figure created for the National Army Museum by Geary Embleton's 'Time Machine' — see p.8. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

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EDITORIAL

We are always pleased to welcome new contributions, and this issue sees the arrival in our columns of a multi-national group, whose special interests are as varied as their backgrounds.

Laurent Mironze, from Paris, was born in 1964 and did his military service with the 9^e Chasseurs Parachutistes. Since 1986 he has worked with an respected colleague François Vauvillier of the publishers Histoire & Collections, and has contributed to *Militaria* and *Tradition* magazines. He is a specialist in the armies of 1914-18 and on French regulation weapons of the 18th and 19th centuries; and worked as assistant and photographer to another 'MH' contributor, Louis Delpérier, on the Franco-Prussian War film *Champ d'Honneur*. His two new books *World War II Infantry in Colour Photographs* and *World War I Infantry in Colour Photographs* are published by Windrow & Greave - see page 19.

Dr. Stephen L. Hardin, born and raised in Texas, is a senior research fellow for the Texas State Historical Assoc. in Austin. He holds a BA and an MA from Southwest Texas University, and a PhD from Texas Christian University. His main field of research, not untypically, is the military history of his state, and he is the author of numerous scholarly articles. Dr. Hardin is currently working on a forthcoming *Osprey Elite* title on the Texas Rangers.

Born in Vienna in 1956, **Dr. Erwin Schmidt** studied history and anthropology at the University of Vienna; since 1981 he has served on the staff of the Austrian Army Museum in that city. His doctoral thesis was on Austrian volunteers in the Anglo-Burmese War, and he has continued his studies on the subject, recently co-authoring with Dr. Jay

Stoner of New York a book on *The Burmese War and Military Reforms*. His other books are a study of the military aspects of the 1938 Anschluss, and of Jewish soldiers in the Hapsburg forces, 1788-1918.

Dr. Schmidt's article is illustrated by **Peter Dennis**, born in 1950 and raised - he tells us - highly on massive doses of superb historical illustrations in *Look and Learn* by the likes of the Embletons, and the book illustrations of Victor Ambrose. After training at Liverpool Art College Peter taught in school for five years, before becoming a full time illustrator. He works mainly in children's books, and has written two himself. His military work will be familiar from his collaboration with Paddy Griffith in *Fieldwork*.

Theft of the Bardney Abbey Sword

Between 21 March and 31 July 1981 this important 14th C. sword was stolen from Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire. Any information concerning this missing sword will be gratefully received by J. M. Pugh, Assistant Keeper of Archaeology, The City & County Museum, Broadgate, Lincoln LN2 1HQ, tel: 0522-530401. The sword is 1036mm long, and has heavy brown river patina. The strongly tapering blade has a broad upper half, with a well-defined fuller extending to a little over half the blade length; the lower half tapers to a centre point and is of flattened diamond section. The grip is short; the tang is stout, with the fuller running up into it; the crossguard is straight, the central portion being rectangular; the arms are waisted, and expand at the ends. The pommel is blunt and wheel-shaped.

Royal Armouries Saturday workshops

The earlier series of these participatory study days, giving professionals and amateurs alike a chance to discuss, study and handle items from



Laurent
Mironze



Stephen Hardin



Peter Dennis



Erwin Schmidt

the country's premier collection, proved very popular. A new series will cover 'Military and Civilian Swords and Swordsmanship, Medieval to Modern' (17 February); 'The Making of Armour, a day in the Conservation Workshop' (24 March); 'The Study of Armour' (28 April); 'Percussion Firearms' (19 May); and 'Artillery and Fortification, a day at Fort Nelson' (23 June). We recommend these imaginative events most strongly, and urge readers to support them - they offer unparalleled opportunities for access to 'the real thing'. Attendance costs £25 per day, or £20 for students, prisoners, and the disabled or unemployed; this includes refreshments and lunch. There is a discount on bookings for three or more days. Details and booking forms can be had from the Education Centre, telephone 01-480-6358, extension 332.

Research request

Reuben A. Walker of 34 Garscarr Park Drive, Liverpool L25 1PA seeks help in identifying any German unit which on 16 June 1916, in the battle of Hoge (first action at Bellward), occupied the trenches attacked by 10th (Scottish) Bn., The King's (Liverpool) Regiment, the Liverpool Scottish then being part of the South Lancashire Brigade. Their objective that day was the trench system between the Merion Road and the Ypres-Rumlers railway, the area between trenches Y17 to Y11 down to the pond at Bellward Farm; their assembly position was in Cambridge Road. If any reader can help identify

German units holding this section of the line, and if so, can suggest whether or not any present day Bundeswehr unit traces its lineage to the WWI unit, Mr. Walker would be most grateful to hear from you.

Ontario MSS

The annual exhibition and reprinting of the Ontario Model Soldier Society will be held on 9 June 1990 at the Novotel Hotel, 3 Park Home Ave., North York, Ontario; and we are asked to tell Canadian readers in contact Jim Walker at 1176 Meriden Court, Mississauga, Ont. L4Y 4A8 for further details.

'Sharkhunters'

An intriguing press release from this organisation, c/o PO Box 21776, Tampa, Florida, 33622, tel: (813) 832-2899, publicises a military/historical run of a 'foreign navy' which will include - apart from sight-seeing, briefings, formal mess banquets, etc. - the attractions of a high-speed patrol on an ASW surface craft; and a patrol on a diesel submarine with a diver to periscope depth! We know no more about it than this; for further details interested readers should apparently send an SAE to the address quoted. It sounds like a most unusual opportunity, and 'MH' would be interested to hear reports from any reader who makes the trip.

Errata

Our apologies for a missing photograph credit on p.15, M1 22; the splendid reconstructions of our *Lithomane* on p.15 and our front cover were by Jean-Louis Van of *Tradition* magazine.

December always provides an excuse to look back over the past year's auctions and review the general state of the market in arms, armour and militaria. The general impression that emerges must be that the market has been rather sluggish and uneven. Gone are the days when almost anything would sell.

It is the attitude of the dealers that does so much to set the tone of the market, for it is they that move the goods along, whether in the auction rooms, the antique fairs or in private sales. If they find it difficult to buy or sell then the whole cycle is slowed. The general feeling among the dealers at the moment is that the top end of the market is still good; the low end struggles along (there will always be the beginners, anxious to acquire something); but the mid-market has rather ground to a halt. One dealer summed up the situation by saying that items at £5,000 and above would sell, as top collectors still had money; items under £1,000 will move; but items between £2,000 and £5,000 just will not shift.

THE AUCTION SCENE

The auction results seem to support this claim; some good prices were realised, but the number of sales dropped during 1989 as the material simply did not emerge. In particular there was a dearth of good Indian arms and armour. The 'big two', Sotheby's and Christie's held several sales with mixed fortunes, but modern sporting guns continue to bring big prices, and the annual Sotheby's prestige sale at Gloucestershire did extremely well, which seems to support the idea that the money is still concentrated at the top. (Incidentally, the famous gunmaking firm of Holland and Holland appears to lack this belief; coming under new ownership during the year, they plan to increase their output of good quality guns.)

The Firearms Amnesty and new regulations increased the input of modern guns temporarily, but their help in the market has more or less finished. The sale of de-activated

firearms has been very noticeable during the past year, with the range offered continually expanding and ranging from small automatic pistols to Vickers machine guns on their tripods.

Neither of the main arms fairs had a sale in the later part of the year, but Phillips offered 386 lots on 30 November. Apart from some very important lots there was a good range of the more collectable items that fall within the range of the less than affluent collector. Third Reich daggers sold at above their usual prices, e.g. Naval £120, SA £130, Army £100 and the heavy RAD heavy £260. A French cavalry sword dated 1833 sold for £70, and it is interesting to remember that had the date been 1813 it would have gone for much more although basically it would be the same pattern.

For the collector looking for a field which is still within range of the middle pocket British military

swords are still good value. In this sale a Rifle Brigade officer's sword for £85, an 1803 infantry officer's for £190, and a regimental one marked 'Royal Welch Fusiliers' sold for £220. A 1796 light cavalry sword by John Gill sold for £320 - the big difference in price was due to three little initials L.L.H. etched on the blade, which were thought to stand for Lambeth Light Horse. The attribution of arms, indeed all antiques, can affect the value immensely; another example was provided by a Victorian Black Watch Scottish drink for which the regimental association pushed the price up to £950. Presentation inscriptions are another stimulant to prices, and the sale included an Imperial German infantry officer's sword dated 1897/8 with such a dedication which exceeded the top estimate and sold for £1,900. Another presentation sword reached double its estimate - £3,100 for a Georgian sword given by the Volunteers of Ilkeston to their major.

Firearms showed no great changes except perhaps a surprising £720 for a Sea Service Flintlock pistol, whilst

rimfire weapons continue in fetch good prices, such as £240 for a .41 derringer.

In the militaria section there were some surprises and disappointments. A cuirass of the Household Cavalry went well above estimate to make £500, and uniforms served in good demand. A Scottish officer's dress tunic and some other coats and sundry other pieces in the usual japed trunk made £280, and the dress uniform of an officer of the 6th Duke of Connaught's Royal Canadian Hussars exceeded the top estimate of £700 to fetch £880. Headdress, as usual, did well, with some surprises such as £220 for a Prussian OR pickelhaube even when described as 'larking some Paris'. A blue cloth officer's helmet, post-1902, of the Wiltshire Regiment sold for £340, but a Taitelton helmet failed to reach the low estimate of £1,500.

Some time ago the same auctioneer sold some items relating to Mussolini for astonishing prices and, as always, the news brings similar relics to the surface. This sale included some more items of his uniform and the four bits sold for £1,200, though a silver presentation cigarette case failed to reach the low estimate of £2,000. Ironically, a commemorative silver cigar box realised £3,800, and a similar box presented by Mussolini to Col. Lindberg, the transatlantic flyer, sold for £6,200. Whether this has any relevance to the present fashions in smoking is unclear... **Frederick Wilkinson**

Videa Releases to Rent:

'The Great Escape II: The Untold Story' (RCA/Columbia:PG)
'Return From the River Kwai' (Braveworld:15)

Two recent releases might appear to be sequels to two of the most popular Second World War movies. Readers of 'AH' will remember that John Sturges' *The Great Escape* (1963) portrayed the mass escape by RAF officers from Stalag Luft III in March 1944; of the 76 who escaped, 51 were executed by the Gestapo, but six avoided recapture. The television mini-series *The Great Escape II: The Untold Story* (1988) is both a retrace and a sequel, and is available on two tapes. Part One, directed by Paul Weinkos, covers the same ground as the earlier film. The main characters are Squadron Leader Roger Bushell (Ian McShane), who masterminds the escape; Major John Dodge (Christopher Reeve), an American in the RAF and a cousin of Winston Churchill; and American fighter pilot Mike Corey (Arthur Denner). Part Two, directed by Jud Taylor, is set mainly after the war. Bitter at the death of their comrades, Dodge and Corey decide to track down those who were responsible. Principal among these are SS advisor Dr. Abrahim (Donald Pleasance - who played a POW in Sturges' movie) and the mysterious Brezhnev (Michael Nader), known as 'The Whip'. The search takes their

CLASSIFIED

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WAR and TRANSPORT second hand and remainder books. Specialist stock at: Heerts of Oak Bookshop, 63 High Street, Rochester, Kent. Personal callers only.

WANTED: World War I and World War II Militaria, anything considered - badges, medals, uniforms, etc. Cash waiting; private collector. Call after 6pm - 0302-321720.

BRITISH SOLDIER WATERCOLOURS. You choose the regiment and period. Examples from the artist - Brian Fraser Harrison, Peddars Cottage, Hessest, Brny St. Edmunds IP30 9AX.

THIRD REICH - ADRIAN FORMAN, expert consultant and author of Bender Publications 'FORMAN'S GUIDE TO THIRD REICH GERMAN AWARDS ... AND THEIR VALUES' (1616+P&P) offers guarantee of originality backed by over 20 years' experience. FREE sample catalogue and book list. Gallery 120, Grays Building, 58 Davies St., Mayfair, London W1Y 1AR.

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FOR SALE: BOOKS ON SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY HISTORY: Zulu War, Anglo-Boer Wars, etc - new and old. Catalogue available, wants lists welcomed. Clarke's Bookshop, 211 Long Street, Cape Town, 8001, South Africa. Phone (01 02721) 235739, Fax 236441.

For sale: British regalia bullion wire badges. City Trading Co., Saghir Chowk, Noshera Road, Gujranwala Pakistan.

THE SCARLET GUNNER

Regimental prints, postcards and original watercolours.

Alix Barker (military artist) and Peter Walton (author) have combined to form this above company. Now available: Alix's postcard Set 7: The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars (6 cards) Set 8: 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars (6 cards) £2 per set inc. p&p. Also reprint of Sumner's 'Irish Regiments of the British Army 1897' Under preparation Set 9 and 10: The Devonshire and Dorset Regiments; Set 11: 2nd Bn. The Light Infantry. Pick up above. Orders/enquiries to: The Scarlet Gunner, Post House, Stoke, Nr Andover, Hants SP11 0ND. SAE for latest list. Trade enquiries welcome.

ON THE SCREEN

through several countries, and uncovers a plot by the OSS to save Nazis guilty of war-crimes in return for information of use in the Cold War.

The film features a jaunty theme tune which echoes the original. However, the surprisingly bleak mood contrasts strongly with its predecessor, and is well suited to its subject. Acting and script avoid false heroics, and the film, shot in Yugoslavia, has good production values.

David Lean's *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) was a fictional story based on Pierre Boulle's novel about Allied POWs working on the notorious Burma-Siam railway. Andrew V. McLaglen's *Return From the River Kwai* (1988) is based on true events concerning the fate of 2,218 POWs incarcerated in a Japanese work camp on the same railway. As the Japanese are losing the war, Major Harada (Tetsuya Nakadai) of the Southern Army Command informs Lt. Tanaka (Gorge Takei), the commander of the work camp, that the fittest of his prisoners must be transported to Japan. Commander Colin Brann (Nick Tate), an Australian naval officer, is keen to use the opportunity to escape, but Major Reginald Benford (Edward Fox), an English medical officer, refuses to co-operate. The POWs are loaded onto a train which is ambushed by Mao tribesmen, led by Col. Grayson (Derek de Lint), a British commando, and Lt. Lee Crawford (Christopher Penn), an American fighter pilot. The attack is a failure, Grayson is killed, and Crawford is captured. The train finally reaches Saigon, where the prisoners are loaded onto the ship that will take them to Japan. Thus starts the most dangerous part of their journey: the South China Sea is patrolled by American submarines, and the ship carries no markings indicating that there are POWs on board.

The story is based on the book by Juan and Clay Blair Jr. Although not strictly a sequel, the film is reminiscent of its predecessor in terms of

both use of music and characterisation. However, Edward Fox's performance is a stiff upper-lip stereotype, and Andrew V. McLaglen's direction vacillates between a sober account of a harrowing true story, and the conventional action-adventure with which he is more usually associated.

Videa Releases to Buy:

'All Three Greats' (CBS/Fox)
'World War II with Walter Cronkite' (CBS/Fox:PG)
'Total War' (DD Distribution)
CBS/Fox have released five more classic war movies under the generic title *All Three Greats*. John Gullermin's *The Blue Max* (1966) is the spectacular story about World War One German fighter aces, starring George Peppard and Ursula Andress. In Henry Hathaway's *The Dawn Patrol* (1951) James Mason gave his first performance as Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. In Franklin J. Schaffner's *Patton: Lust for Glory* (1969), George C. Scott gave an equally memorable performance in the title rôle. Mark Robson's fictional *Van Ryan's Express* (1965) stars Frank Sinatra as an American pilot who masterminds a mass escape from a POW camp in Italy; while in Henry Koster's triangle romance *D-Day: the Sixth of June* (1956), British Richard Todd and American Robert Taylor vie for the affections of Dany Wyner.

The 50th anniversary of the start of the Second World War has inspired the release of two more documentary series on video. *World War Two With Walter Cronkite* was produced in 1981, although adapting material compiled some years earlier. The seven tapes, introduced by Walter Cronkite, each contain four segments. Segments dealing with large scale operations such as D-Day hardly offer anything new, but those dealing with more limited subject matter, such as the Doolittle Raid, are more interesting. With an emphasis on American involvement, and an absence of any material relat-

ing in the Eastern Front, the series cannot be regarded as a definitive history of the war. However, with a running time of 90 minutes, the tapes do offer value for money.

Total War is based on two feature-length documentaries originally compiled by Kurt Palm in Germany. They have been slightly re-edited, given a new English narration written and delivered by Bryan Wolfe, and released in three one-hour episodes. There are no maps or interviews; but the narration does include observations about how, for example, advances in weapons technology influenced the course of events. Some of the footage is familiar from productions like Franz Hippler's *Victory in the West* (1940), John Ford's *December 7th* (1942), and the *Victory at Sea* television series, although some of the German footage is allegedly being made available for the first time. If the intention was to examine the major battles of the war within the context of a complete overview, the series is unbalanced; for example, the crucial battle of Kursk barely rates a mention, yet there is an extremely long Kamikaze sequence. However, if the intention was to create as much combat footage as possible into three hours (with an appropriately noisy soundtrack), then the series has without doubt achieved its aim.

Cinema Release: 'Henry V'

Directed by Kenneth Branagh (PG)

The recent sad death of Sir Laurence Olivier has served as a reminder of his many achievements on stage and screen both as actor and director. Obituaries were numerous in celebrating his 1944 film version of Shakespeare's *Henry V* as his greatest achievement on film, and the BBC duly broadcast it as part of its obituary tribute. Seems become printed indelibly on the memory: the opening panning shot across Elizabethan London to close in on the Globe theatre; the magnificently realised Agincourt sequence, with hundreds of French knights galloping their chargers across the field to Sir William Walton's stirring score; the elec-



Kenneth Branagh (Henry) and Brian Blessed (Exeter) splattered with mud and blood on the field of Agincourt. The film does not attempt exact accuracy in costumes and armour, but the impressionistic approach is generally successful. The expansion of the part of Exeter – visually, but without hampering with the text – is interesting and effective in several key scenes. The Agincourt sequence is in one respect much more authentic than Olivier's version, shot, in Irish summer meadows; Branagh's 'happy few' struggle in a raw, muddy, autumn landscape. The hand-to-hand sequences clearly owe something to Orson Welles' solution to the same problems in his memorable *Chimes at Midnight* (1966). (Renaissance Films plc)

trifling climax of Olivier's St. Crispin's Day speech, on a rising note that makes the back hair stand up no matter how many times one hears it. Olivier's timing could hardly have been more appropriate: the film's release coincided with the Allied invasion of Normandy, and a mood of optimism that the end of the war was in sight at last. (The film is in fact dedicated to Britain's Commandos and Airborne troops.)

By any standards it is a difficult act to follow, and it is a testimony to Olivier's genius that a cinematic *Henry V* was not attempted again for nearly 45 years. However, using principal performers from the 1984 RSC production and actors associated with the Renaissance Theatre Company, Kenneth Branagh has bravely attempted to emulate Olivier in both directing and playing the title rôle in his own adaptation. The cast list reads like a *Who's Who* of British acting talent. Paul Scofield gives an authority to the King of France; Brian Blessed makes a jovial but dangerous Exeter; Robbie Coltrane plays the dying John Falstaff, with flashbacks to his heyday in *Henry IV*; Ian Holm plays Captain Fluellen with dignity, and without the knockabout 'leak' scene; Richard Briers is barely recognisable as Bardolph, the former drinking companion whom Henry is

forced to hang for looting. Actresses include Judi Dench as Mistress Quickly; and Emma Thompson (Branagh's co-star from the TV series *The Fouries of War*, and now his wife) plays Princess Katherine of France.

The film opens boldly in a deserted film studio from which Derek Jacobi's Chorus, surrounded by the paraphernalia of film-making which catches the sense of his speech, leads us to the room where the Archbishop of Canterbury (Charles Kay) is convincing Henry of his moral right to pursue his claim to France. The visual tone of the film is established with striking compositions, dramatic close-ups and careful lighting. Apart from the battle sequences the film rarely strays from the studio set, to the extent that a brief scene shot at Beachy Head jars.

The film breaks free from the confines of the studio for the Harfleur and Agincourt sequences, both recreated on the Shepperton backlot. For the former a ruined gatehouse, photographed at night against roaring flames, forms an effective breach to which Henry can urge his men once more. Agincourt is shot largely in close-up; budgetary considerations doubtless obliged Branagh to eschew a sweeping cavalry charge in favour of the reactions on the English faces as we hear the growing thunder of thousands of hooves bearing down upon them. The fighting is confused and bloody, shot at times both with hand-held camera and in slow motion. Only in the aftermath, as Henry carries the bloody corpse of Falstaff's potboy from the massacred English baggage train, is the full extent of the battlefield revealed in a long tracking shot.

Branagh dominates every scene in which he appears, until he meets Katherine; only then, as he woos his prize of war, do we feel that he has really met his match. Branagh must be congratulated for his perseverance in creating this opportunity and bringing it to a successful conclusion. He has undoubtedly produced a worthy addition to the list of cinematic Shakespeare productions – his first, but we must hope not his last.

Stephen J. Greenhill

REVIEWS

'Field Equipment of the Infantry 1914-1945' by Robert Fisch; Greenberg Publishing Co. Inc., 7566 Main St. Skyesville, MD 21784; 262 pp; 108 b/w photos, 16 colour plates, 17 line drawings; h/bk.; \$40.00

It is far too easy for publishers to tout their releases as 'the first ever' or 'the most detailed', but the publisher of *Field Equipment of the Infantry 1914-1945* can justly make such claims. My first thought on seeing this highly detailed work was, 'Where were you when I first began collecting web equipment?' It is one of those books that collectors and model builders have long hoped for.

It charges straight into the subject with chapters on cartridge belt sets (belts, suspenders, pouches), knapsack sets, haversacks, footwear, mess equipment, entrenching tools, gas masks, tents/rain gear, and miscellaneous items. Over 600 items of infantryman's equipment are illustrated and identified, from 20 countries. This includes equipment from not only the First and Second World Wars, but from the inter-war years as well. Each item is illustrated in extremely clear photographs with its description, materials, purpose, markings, and estimated value (in US dollars) on the facing page. To provide an idea as to the book's depth and breadth, 121 items of mess equipment and water bottles are illustrated and described. Of particular value to many will be the gasmask chapter – a difficult field for collectors – detailing 36 masks and carriers. The hundred-plus excellent equipment photographs, most displaying multiple items, are supplemented by 48 superior colour photographs of the equipments and weapons being worn by a correctly uniformed model replicating soldiers of the principal and secondary belligerents of the First and Second World Wars.

Besides the principal period subject equipments, the line drawings from the 1906 *Comparative Studies of the Field Equipment of the Foot Soldier of the French and Foreign Armies* are reprinted as an appendix. These 14 plates depict detailed drawings of scores of field equipment items used 1895-1906 by most of the world's then important military powers. Other appendices depict national equipment markings, advise on how to care for the collection, and as an added bonus, 11 three-view period photographs of the different national infantrymen participating in the 1900-1901 China Relief Expedition.

It must be emphasised that the equipment covered in the book is solely that of the standard infantry rifleman. Specialised items, officers' equipment, and items associated with weapons other than rifles (sub-machine gun and automatic rifle magazine pouches, holsters) are not discussed. This, however, detracts only slightly when the full extent of the book's vast amount of material is

appraised. It is obvious that the text is informed by a deep background knowledge, drawn from the author's years as the Curator of Arms and Armor at the West Point Military Academy Museum and as a collector himself. This book is a must for any serious collector or modeller of modern militaria. GLR

'That Astonishing Infantry: A History of the 7th Foot (Royal Fusiliers) in the Peninsular War 1809-1814' by Andrew Nettlehip; available from the author at 375 Springvale Road, Sheffield, S10 1LP; 158 pp.; maps, line illus.; p/bk.; £6.50 plus £1.50 p&p

Of all the regiments which served in Wellington's Peninsular Army, the Royal Fusiliers (contemporary spelling) is among the most significant, if for no other reason than from forming two-thirds of the 'Fusilier Brigade' which cleared the heights at Albuera; one of the most gallant but sanguinary episodes in British military annals, this gave rise to Napier's immortal passage concerning 'that astonishing infantry' which forms the title of this work.

This, the author's first work, is a history of the regiment's Peninsular service assembled largely from Cooper's *Rough Notes*, Knowles' *Letters*, Cannon's 1847 history, and appendices largely from Oman. It is exactly as the title implies, a history of the unit, without much background on its composition or its previous services; and (as a regimental history should) concentrates upon the regiment rather than repeating yet again passages on the general history of the Peninsular War. Although there is little discussion concerning exactly how the Fusilier Brigade was sent forward at Albuera (basically, without authorisation – considerable correspondence steamed away in the *United Service Journal* in 1840!) it is pleasing to note extracts from Lowry Cole's *Memoirs*, including the account by Cole's Swiss ADC, Maj. Roverea, which is included in this book along with the more usual accounts. One of the most appealing Peninsular memoirs by an 'other rank', Cooper's little book (even in its 1914 Carlisle reprint) is extremely scarce; so the present hook offers a valuable opportunity for reference to some of the reminiscences and opinions of that worthy sergeant. Mr. Nettlehip's hook forms an attractive record of the regiment's service; and casualty statistics derived from Cannon demonstrate just what hard service the 7th had to endure. The maps are drawn freehand, but the text is complemented by a number of attractive semi-caricature, almost cartoon-like sketches. The author clearly has a feeling for his subject, being a member of the Napoleonic Association's 7th Foot re-enactment unit; and the title is recommended, especially to all those lacking ready access to Cooper, Cannon, et al. PJH

'TIME MACHINE'

Illustration in Three Dimensions

During the 1970s one of the most prolific and respected of military history illustrators was the Sussex-based artist Gerry Embleton. Over the past few years, at the kind of gatherings where art editors, designers, modellers, or other buffs have a chance to exchange shop-talk, someone or other would usually ask 'Whatever happened to Gerry?' — it has been some time now since he was last available to British publishers. A startling answer to that question now confronts visitors to the National Army Museum. Two remarkable life-size figures of World War I and II British Tommies are the first products of Gerry's new company 'Time Machine' to be seen in public in this country.

Since Embleton moved to Switzerland to live and work about ten years ago, he has been moving steadily away from the journeyman illustration work which made his reputation. Various chance meetings and opportunities have led him into a wholly new field: as he puts it, 'illustrations in three dimensions, rather than two'. In 1988 he set up his own company, 'Time Machine', to provide museums, private collections, and other venues

for historical display with a range of services and products. The most striking are 'TM's 'one/one scale models', which we illustrate here.

Throughout Europe and North America more and more museums are beginning to include in their displays life-size costumed figures, often in realistic settings which might be compared to full-size 'boxed dioramas'. Sometimes the figures are used to display original uniforms or armour in the

museum collections; sometimes, accurately reproduced replicas, to give visitors a life-like impression of the appearance in use of original costumes too rare or fragile to be displayed in this way.

TM's full-size figures can already be seen in a number of public and private collections on the Continent, where they attract a lot of attention by their lifelike poses, realistic hands and faces (these are sometimes positively spooky, as our photos show), and accurate costume. Apart from full-size figures produced to order, with any level of reproduced costume the client requires up to and including armour, TM also offer any kind of reduced scale model work that may be needed, 'custom made' to fit into any existing display, complete with lighting plans, false perspective effects to tie

in with actual-size foreground displays, and so on. The heart of the work is the design and production of three-dimensional scenes incorporating costumed figures, at any scale from 'one/one' to minute.

Below

A 14th-century defender of the castle of Leuzburg, in elf and hood. The head and hands are cast from life — including the open mouth and teeth — in plaster, painted with acrylics and oils. (© Roland Beck)

Bottom:

The scene incorporating the startled stool-thruster is an attack on Leuzburg by the invading 'Gugler' army (which included English troops) in 1375. The tableau incorporates original weapons and mail alongside specially commissioned reconstructions, and is set against the actual wall and window of the tower. Hardly visible from this angle are two attackers, glimpsed through the shattered shutter as they force their way in, the leader sinister in a hounskull bascinet. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)



Illustrations, not dummies

'We don't produce costumed dummies or mannequins', said Embleton when we interviewed him in his pleasant office/studio in the village of Onnens at the foot of the Swiss Jura. 'You can't buy our figures and dress them yourself. You buy from us a finished work, an illustration, with all the features, the hair, the costume, weapons, and any other 'props' fixed in place by us. We control the final look. We can supply free-standing figures, or 'boxed' scenes with false perspective, lighting effects, the works. We like to set them up in place, to ensure that all the little details are right – it's the details that distinguish our work. Tiny bits of lifelike wear-and-tear; the way the light falls, or a finger presses hard on a surface – things like that make all the difference between a good illustration and a careless one. We aren't in the business of mass production.

'We mostly do our own research, or know who to contact for information on a specific subject. We have a huge reference library on the actual history of civilian and military costume and all kinds of personal effects – I stress 'actual', because we only use reference drawn from primary sources. As a conventional illustrator and a 'three-dimensional' one, I've been collecting information on costume, arms and armour for more than 30 years.'

'Time Machine's approach to pure costume reconstruction is strikingly different from some techniques used for display figures, particularly from those employing fabric strips impregnated with various hardening agents, the whole figure being painted over finally like an enlarged 54mm conversion. Most of 'TM's figures wear clothes that you could wear in the street – many of their costumes have indeed been worn by 'TM staff or friends, to 'break them down' realistically.

'There is an absolute flood of bad figures on the market',

says Embleton. 'It is often claimed that they are dressed in 'accurately researched historical costume', but in fact too many of them look like extras from an old Hollywood B-movie. We're determined to stick to the highest standards. Just as with good 'flat' historical illustration, we try to create both an overall atmosphere that's true to the individual subject, and

details that can stand up to the closest examination.

'We frequently work closely with museum staff, and with freelance experts on particular subjects. We're happy to do so, obviously – co-operation and shared enthusiasm are essential for the work we do.

'Outside contacts whom we call upon for help and advice on particular projects

Another figure at Leuzburg is this reconstruction of Ulrich, Count of Leuzburg on crusade in the Holy Land, c.1189. All clothing, armour and equipment are reconstructed, as is the street setting – and a second figure, invisible here but set in the gallery rafters, of a Saracen archer. The horse was specially commissioned from Daniel Opplinger of Basle Natural History Museum; basically a sculpture, down to the protruding veins, it incorporates an actual horse skull, hooves and hide. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)





Above:

The defence of the castle of Lenzburg in the mid-17th century: a gunner touches off a cannon. This figure incorporates an original breastplate, sword, linscock and powderhorn; all other items, including the cannon and the wall, are reconstructed, and special smoke, sound and flash effects are designed into the scene. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

Above right:

One of the segments of Bernese garrison troops at musket-drill, c.1780. Muskets are original; all else is reconstructed, the uniforms after an original now in Bern's Historical Museum. Lighting effects focus on individual figures in turn, each one showing a different drill position, while audio effects reproduce the NCO's shouted orders—in the correct period dialect... Note the extraordinary realism of the hands, cast from life actually gripping the weapons correctly. (Photos John Howe, © TM AG, and © Roland Brck)

often get deeply involved, and give much more of their time and thought than they originally intend. Creative people in any field seem to get real pleasure out of helping to create our figures; their love

of accurate detail bubbles up in the form of obscure bits of useful information, and extra "props" which they hunt down at their own initiative. Friends, colleagues and

contacts made during my years as a conventional illustrator are all involved from time to time in TM's work. It's really a large, flexible group of independent artists, researchers and crafts people,

all well-established in their own fields, who share *sympatico* feelings about realistic illustration, and who are all in contact with this "core" organisation here in Switzerland'.



The costumed figure of a German woman of the 15th century, produced for an exhibition in Spandau fortress to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the city of Berlin. All costumes are made from materials as close to the period originals as possible, based on carefully researched patterns, and 'broken down' by being worn and 'distressed' to make them look believable. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

Above right:

The remarkable faithfulness of textures possible with modern casting techniques demonstrated by an unpainted casting of a hand, a lacerated shirt and a turned-back coat cuff. (© Roland Brck)

The Lenzburg project

The largest single project on which Gerry Embleton and some of the other people who now form Time Machine have worked together was for Schloss Lenzburg, an impressive castle on a beetling crag in the canton of Aarau, Switzerland. At the time Embleton was head of the Art Department of the Swiss Institute of Arms and Armour, based at Grandson castle. He was a senior

member of the team which in 1986-87 created for Lenzburg 12 scenes incorporating 28 life-size figures, in a sequence telling the military history of the castle. Some of our photos show figures from this major display; and, having seen the whole thing, we urge visitors to that part of Switzerland not to miss any chance of taking a look for themselves. We are convinced that this approach is going to spread to more and more museums as time goes by.

Embleton left the Institute in 1988 to set up Time Machine in its attractive premises at Onnens, near Yverdon. TM share the building with the Centre for Restoration and Conservation run by another expatriate Englishman, Ian Ashdown. Ashdown is an armourer of international repute; and the two teams are proud to have

Captions to colour photos overleaf:

(1) 'No one technique is used to make our figures; we use whatever we think is suitable in a particular case. We chop up shop mannequins, cast from life, sculpt and model using plastics, metal, wire, plaster, acrylics - anything that will give the result we want.' Ulrich of Lenzburg takes shape. (© Roland Brck)



(2) Two of TM's team at work: Christine Payot moulds the face of Guillaume Ferval. 'We use soft, well-ried alginate for moulding, and avoid the silicone products that are now on the market. They are not harmless - they haven't been in use for long enough, and there is always a risk in a prison with sensitive skin. We simply don't know the long-term effects. The international casualty list of those made seriously ill by fibreglass, resins, paints and sprays is growing; it's common sense to be cautious.' TM's technique is difficult, slow, and complicated, and it has taken a lot of practice to get first-class results. TM are also trying to cast entire male figures, and decorative fragments of human bodies like the studio. (© Roland Brck)

(3) Neither a medieval doctor, nor Baron Frankenstein, but Gerry Embleton drawing in the pupil of an eye for one of Lenzburg's 14th-century defenders. Faces and hands are painted with acrylics and oils, and finished when the figures are in their final positions so that shadows can be dropped and colour adjusted to suit the lighting and atmosphere, exactly as if they were part of an illustration in two dimensions. 'We don't aim for photographic realism, but for the sort of slightly exaggerated effect you get in a painting, which can in fact give a more realistic feeling than a photograph.' (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

(4) Costumier Roselyne Chiquis works on the headcloth of the 15th-century German figure seen full-length in an accompanying photograph. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

(5) 1515: a Swiss recruiting officer, hand-tyed as he hands a coin to a recruit. This is a good example of TM's attention to detailed research. His rap bribe is slashed to form two 'rims', a style shown only in some drawings by an artist who served on campaign in 1515, and perhaps a peculiarly Swiss fashion. (© Roland Brck)

(6) Close-up of the dying Napoleonic drummer-boy; his face was cast from life and moulded in soft moussu; teeth and tongue were cast separately and added afterwards. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

(7) One of the two new figures displayed in London's National Army Museum: a lance-corporal of 2nd Bn., Essex Regt., 36th Inf. Bde., 49th Div. in NW Europe, 1944. His slavers ripped open to dress a flesh wound, he leans with loosened equipment to gulp a mug of tea. Shock is sitting in: he favours his increasingly painful arm.

The other figure is shown on our cover: an apparently corky 'lance-jack' of the 1st Bn., North Staffs. Regt., 24th Div. dogs back from the trenches in 1918. He is a

tough veteran, dog-tired, mud-covered and busy. He sves a rammer, in a pul, and gives a urinary gain and 'thinks up'. 'Are we down-landed?' Perhaps...

TM created and then lived for several weeks with the slowly developing characters of these two 'Tom-mies'. 'They definitely had a life of their own; the faces demanded certain sorts of bodies, and then the 'person' demanded that his clothes should be worn in a certain way. We even found ourselves including them in our coffee breaks!'

The uniforms and equipment are a mixture of original and carefully adapted later pieces. 'We cast 1914-18 ammunition clips to give the pouches the right filled look, but enough real ones were supplied, along with the uniform, by illustrator Paul Hannon to enable us to show the glint of brass in the right places. It was a real pleasure to work with experts like Paul. They gave incredibly detailed instructions to TM's Head of Costume, Christine Mommoulon, so that the adaptations of uniform parts could be perfect. Apart from chasing down necessary badges and small bits of equipment, they voluntarily gave us lovely details like a jack-knife, cigarette packet, and a beautifully mocked-up can of 1918 bully beef, even though these were often not visible in the final set-up.'

The buses were made by Victor Shriver and Gerry Embleton when the figures were set up in the NAM; Shriver went so far as to provide snail shells and rabbit droppings for a tiny piece of heathland; and enthusiastically NAM staff wished to provide a huge shell fragment and a piece of marmalade jar for the 1918 mud! TM has been commissioned to create ten further figures, for the National Army Museum's forthcoming exhibition devoted to Wellington's Army. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

(8) This remarkable figure of a medieval German pear-seller is approximately 24ins. high - it formed part of a model street scene for the Berlin 700th anniversary exhibition. The display included figures ranging from life-size down to 3ins. high: it featured a street seen through the window of a life-size shoemaker's shop, the buildings (made by Embleton and 'MI's' designer Victor Shriver) giving the impression of a 5th-yard alley in 12in. of real space. This model was made by Gillian Embleton, daughter of the late Ron Embleton, painter and model-maker. The family tradition of fairy-tale illustration continues in a project by Gerry and Gillian, a three-dimensional scene based on a wizard, dragons, and classic fairy-tale characters, 'Arthur Rackham trees, and things that go bump in the night...' (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

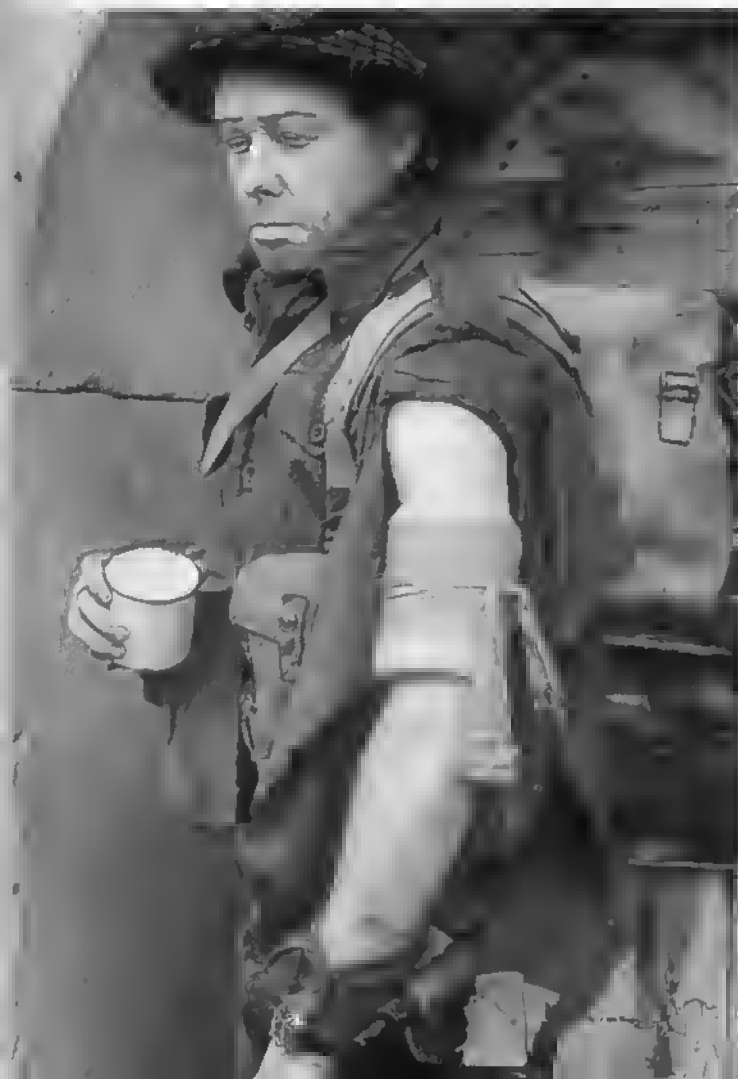
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8



The rewards of service . . . a mutilated Swiss veteran of French service, 1780s. This figure at Leuzburg is one of Gerry Embleton's favourites: 'I wanted a figure which would add a grim note to the exhibition, giving the viewer a jolt without being too obviously sentimental. This head-on view actually lacks some of the menace of the hunched cripple when you see him 'in the flesh' - one visitor shuddered when they came face to face, and said that 'the beggar looked as if he could get to the door before I could!' The coat was exactly copied by cosplayer Caroline Thorpe from a surviving example she was allowed to handle and sketch at the Berne Historical Museum. It was then frequently worn by working members of the team, and finally used for some weeks as a cleaning rag in the armourer's forge. It began to look quite realistic after that . . .' (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

A young drummer-boy of the 4th Swiss Regiment of Napoleon's Grande Armée sits dying in the snow beside the Berezina during the retreat from Moscow. (Photo John Howe, © TM AG)

continued from page 11

worked together on a marvellous private collection of more than 36 medieval

armours and hundreds of original weapons and helmets of all kinds. Ian Ashdown is responsible for restoration work on the client's collection, and TM have made lifelike display figures for the armours.

'To handle the actual pieces; to draw and photograph them, to weigh them in your hands, to search for and try to reconstruct the anatomy of the men who wore the armours is an absolutely unique privilege', says Embleton, who is a passionately interested medievalist. 'We've both learned an enormous amount. It's been like a ten-year intensive study course in arms and armour.' An armour displayed on a reconstruction of the figure of its original wearer looks totally different from the ill-fitting and clumsy suit as usually displayed on a metal stand or a 'stock' figure - a real metal skin, living, mobile, and dangerous.

'Our figures have benefited from this experience. It's a circular process: the originals

help us make the reconstructions, which help us understand the originals. So long as the work is carefully done, you can learn important things.'

It lives . . .

An intriguing off-shoot of Embleton's work on medieval subjects is his involvement with a 'living history' group, the Compagnie of Sainte George, representing an artillery company of c.1470 (see our report in 'MI' No.17 of an event in France attended by some members of this group).

'We try to present a sort of "living painting" of the period - the visual presentation is most important to us.' Several members of Time Machine belong to the group; and there is a close tie between the work that goes into creating some of TM's figures, and the living reconstructions. 'Like the figures, if it's carried out with real care and attention to detail "living history" can fit very well into a museum's range of presentations to the public. It can form part of special exhibitions and educational displays.

'Of course, it must all be

done with discretion and restraint. I'm certainly not in favour of filling all our museums with figures, and all our castles with jousting in knitted mail . . . but nor am I in favour of treating museums like churches, and the objects in them as holy relics. Our museums are public; I believe that they can and should be made interesting and exciting, and the relevance of their collections to human life made vividly clear, without disturbing the absolutely vital job of research, conservation and restoration.'

We found our visit to Time Machine fascinating, as would anyone who has ever dabbled in modelling, however humbly and in any scale. Beyond the immediate visual pleasure given by this sort of imaginative work, it seems to us that there are serious lessons to be learnt. The whole approach of public museums to their function, and the face they present to their public, is the subject of current debate; and TM's work is a leading example of one of the major factors which museums are going to have to take into consideration in the 1990s.

MI



A Medieval King's Helmet Restored

LAURENT MIROUZE
Translated by Sarah Fleming

The excavations that were being carried out in the summer of 1984 in the Cour Carrée (square courtyard) of the Louvre, a rich archaeological site on which the medieval Louvre once stood, had promised to reveal much new and fascinating information on the day-to-day life of the Parisians and the military architecture of the Middle Ages. At that time nobody could have dared imagine the wonderful discovery that was to be made, between 25 and 30 July, at the bottom of a narrow well lost in obscurity for centuries: amongst over 900 bronze fragments, the mutilated remains of a parade helmet which dated from the beginning of the 15th century, and which had belonged to King Charles VI of France ⁽¹⁾.

The discovery of these famous remains is extraordinary both because of the object itself – a unique royal helmet from the medieval period – and because of the conditions in which they were found. Indeed, the well in the keep where the discovery was made had already been visited and excavated by the party led by Bertie and Vacquer in 1866. The latter concluded in a report published in 1868: 'We gave up trying to find the bottom' ⁽²⁾. In fact they gave up when they were just one metre away from the prize – a precious layer of slimy deposits and various types of earth which concealed a regular treasure trove: remains of leather and metal; pewter bowls and medallions showing the arms of the Dauphin Louis (eldest son of Charles VI, the Duke of Guyenne, who died in 1416 before he could come to the throne; fragments of finely-worked leather baldrick; a scabbard chape and bronze heraldic plaques; and finally, the remains of a helmet and associated crown of royal origin.

Most of these objects date from the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries, when the Louvre was a fortress defending the west of Paris. Built during the reign

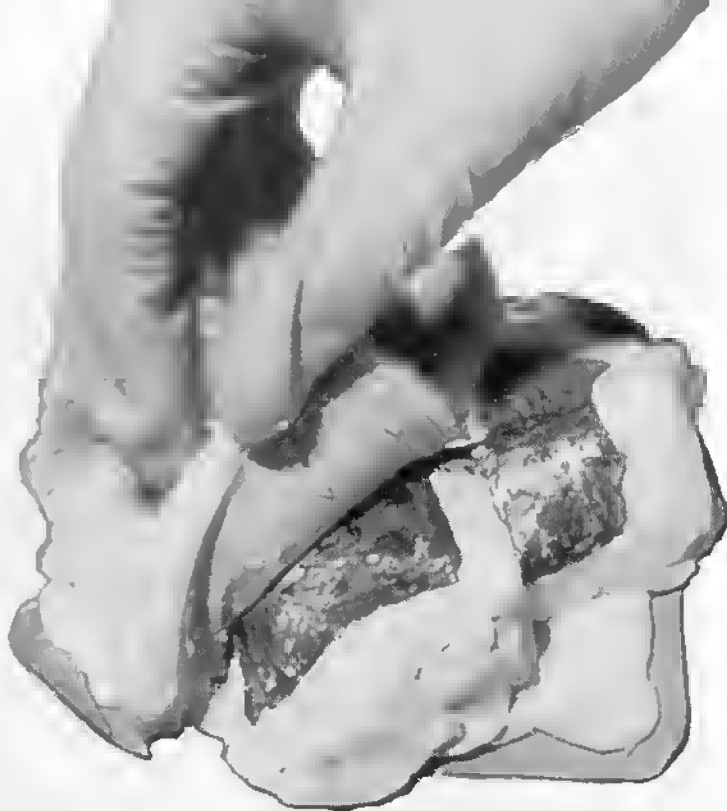
of Philippe Auguste and completed in 1202, its military and defensive role became more important with the growth of Paris, and it became a royal residence in around 1360. François I had it demolished in 1528 in order to build the Renaissance palace that we are familiar with today. The excavations of the Cour Carrée brought to light the foundations of the 12th century castle, with its

keep, towers, moats and walls, drawbridge pillars, etc. Thanks to the work of the Commission du Vieux-Paris these are now on display in an impressive archaeological crypt in which the visitor can see the objects discovered during the excavations, in particular the royal helmet and its reconstructed replica (under the Sully pavilion, entrance via the pyramid).

The entrance to one of the wells on the excavation site. This is not the well in which the helmet fragments were discovered, which was only three feet across, making the work of the excavators extremely difficult. (Photo © F. Panhac, EPCL)

Below:
The collected fragments were cleaned, and the work of identification began – not an easy task given the size of many of them. Nevertheless, two fragments of the royal helmet can be recognised here, at upper left. (Photo © J.-L. Goudard, CVP)





Left:

The original fragment is cast in a flexible resin, which can then be restored to the form of the original before distortion. (Photo © Musée du Fer, Nancy)

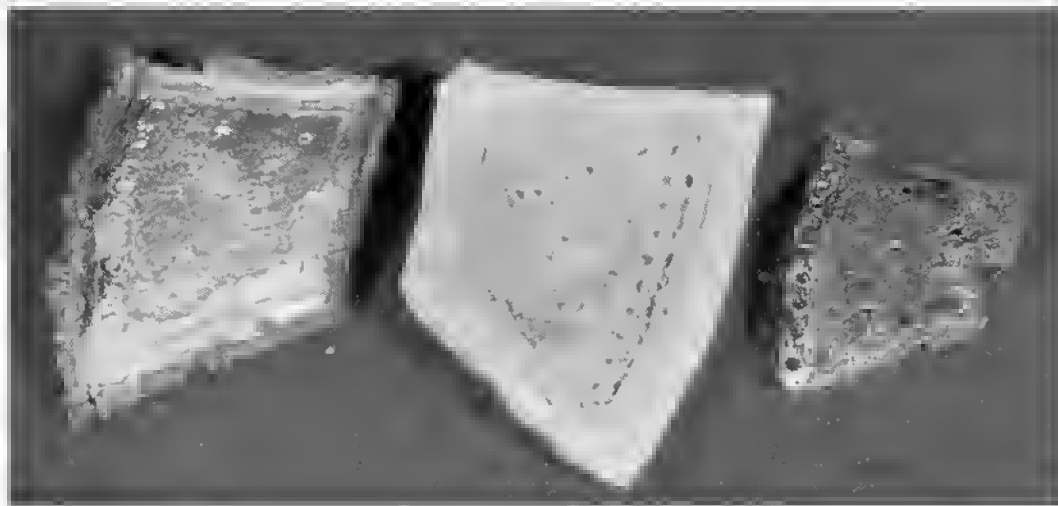
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The resin casting is then stiffened; and by electrotyping a copper replica (left) can be produced. (Photo © Musée du Fer, Nancy)

The fragments and the documents

Of the hundreds of fragments brought up from the bottom of the narrow well (under difficult conditions, since only one man at a time could work at the bottom) 155 have been identified as pieces of a 'head defence' of royal origin because it was decorated with a crown of *fleurs-de-lys*. The discovery nearby and at the same level of harness plaques decorated with the winged hart emblem of Charles VI (adopted by the sovereign in 1382), and *fleurs-de-lys*, a symbol of the Capetian dynasty, and of medallions and fragments of copper strap attributed to the Dauphin Louis naturally allowed its attribution to that king. But a discovery of quite a different nature surprisingly and opportunely backed up this hypothesis.

The accounts of the king's equerry of 1411, kept in the National Archives, state: *'Item en une tour appelé la tour de la terrasse (au Louvre): deux chapeaux de fer dorez, hachiez à fleurs de liz, l'un à couronnes et à dauphins et y a autour VI escus des armes de Mons. le Dauphin, et l'autre semblablement doze à fleurs de liz eslevées à une couronne et au dessous des tefs volans et a un mot qui dit EN BIEN et au dessus une fleur de liz'* (3). This text describes



very precisely the helmet found in the keep's well, on which it was possible to read, once certain parts had been cleaned, the motto 'EN BIEN'. There can no longer be any doubt that the fragments are indeed those of the helmet of Charles VI described in the accounts of 1411.

The conditions in which the discovery was made and the state in which the fragments were found allowed the archaeologists to suggest the following hypothesis regarding the sad end of this royal helmet. On the one hand, it seemed surprising that an object of such quality would end up broken at the bottom of a dark well. On the other hand, the damage suffered by the pieces had apparently been caused deliber-

ately, since they were lacerated, twisted, scratched and charred, as if somebody had been bent on their destruction.

At the time of Charles VI the helmet was probably kept in the Great Tower of the castle which served as an arsenal for a while. It was stolen, and the robber(s) tried to salvage the gold from the gilding by scratching at it and melting it. To do this they broke it into small pieces which they heated up in a small receptacle used as a crucible. This receptacle was also found in the well, with traces of melted metal inside. Once the crime had been committed, the crucible and the debris were thrown into the well, where they lay undiscovered for five centuries.

The restoration

Restoration promised to be difficult in view of the state of the remains. The work, carried out between November 1984 and March 1988 by the Metal Archaeology Laboratory in Nancy, was begun by cleaning the fragments first by chemical treatment, then by hand. The pieces which were not deformed and had been broken cleanly were stuck back together, and the whole was strengthened by applying to the back a fibre-glass and epoxy resin. The fragility of the pieces – since mineralisation had done its work in making the metal brittle – made it impossible to restore the original form. The electrotype method was therefore used, which consists of casting each cleaned

fragment with a fine resin which takes on an impression of the engraved surface. This flexible impression is shaped to the original form and strengthened with a stronger resin. By means of electroplating copper a replica is produced from the mould, and mounted on a plastiline form. By this elaborate technique it was possible to reconstruct two-thirds of the crown and four-fifths of the helmet (the missing parts presently being indicated by a smooth, slightly recessed surface).

Finally, the remounted helmet was cast in one single piece, from which a proof copy was gilded electrolytically. The crown, which was treated in the same way, could then be remounted. On



A

Captions to the colour photographs:

(A) The replica of the royal helmet, completed in March 1989, as now displayed; the method of reconstruction is described in the text. A 'parade' headpiece of symbolic significance but little protective value, the gilded copper chapel de fer or 'kettle helmet' originally had a fleur-de-lys crest on a star-shaped base; and appliqué emblems of winged harts – Charles VI's personal symbol – were originally mounted around the brim and on the skull, where the groups of holes are seen here. On the detachable crown surrounding the skull of the replica,

one of the three recovered medallions bearing the arms of France (of eight originally present) can be seen at the right. The repeated motto 'EN BIEN' can be seen on the band. The smooth areas of the replica indicate parts of the original which have not been found. Note the quality of the work on the skull, which is completely gilded and engraved with oak branches. (Photos © J.-L. Godard, CVP)

(B) The original helmet fragments, as now displayed next to the replica in the archaeological crypt at the Louvre. The metal, which has become brittle, was permanently

distorted by the robbers who tried to salvage the gold. (C) The fragments of the crown, with the three recovered medallions bearing the arms of France. From the state of these helmet and crown fragments one may judge the quality of the restoration work undertaken by the Metal Archaeology Laboratory at Nancy. (Photos © J.-L. Godard, CVP)

(D) A heraldic plaque found in the well of the Cour Carrée, after cleaning; it shows the winged hart emblem of Charles VI on a blue field with three lilies. (Photo © J.-L. Godard, CVP)



B



D

C



When all the fragments had been reproduced, the work of remounting the helmet and crown could begin. Missing parts were newly made 'from scratch', with a featureless finish. In all, work on the original fragments and on the replica represented some 1,500 hours of work. (Photo © J.-L. Godard, CVP)

the band three copies of the three medallions showing the Arms of France have been placed, the originals of which were found in the well. The crown originally included eight of these, four rectangular and four diamond-shaped. The result is a magnificent replica of the original helmet, faithful both in form and engraved decoration. The original itself has been remounted with its mutilated and distorted fragments.

The helmet

The discovery of this helmet is of exceptional interest when one considers how rarely head defences from this period have survived, *a fortiori* of royal origin (see also the royal bascinet from the treasury of the cathedral of Chartres). The Charles VI example is a 'parade' quality *chapel de fer* very richly decorated but executed in bronze and copper 1.5mm thick, which offers very meagre effective protection to the head. Conical in shape, and 20cm across at its base, the helmet has a brim 4.5cm wide at the front and 7.5cm wide at the back. This brim was originally decorated with 14 little appliqué winged harts; all that remain are the holes where they were mounted, visible in the photographs.

The skull is surrounded by a removable crown made up of a series of eight *fleurs-de-lys*, four large and four small, arranged alternately. The band of the crown, 3cm wide, is guilloché and consists of four engravings of the motto 'EN BIEN' divided into two groups of three letters on either side of the rectangular and diamond-shaped medallions. These medallions are scattered with *fleurs-de-lys* on a blue field. The skull of the helmet is



guilloché and decorated with engravings representing oak branches. Above the small *fleurs-de-lys* on the front of the crown were two appliqué representations of winged harts. These have also disappeared, but the holes where they were mounted show exactly how they were positioned. The 1411 text tells us that the crest was made up of a large *fleur-de-lys* mounted on a star-shaped base; these two elements have disappeared. The overall shape of this helmet, with its crown set to the rear, is original and unique, and has nothing in common with the warriors' helmets of the period.

The balance between the representations of the winged hart and the *fleurs-de-lys*, symbols of Charles VI and the Capetian dynasty respectively, is no coincidence in a period during which France was in the midst of the Hundred Years War and when the Armagnacs and the Burgundians were fighting a fratricidal and bloody civil war for power. Charles VI, the mad king, had to display with pomp his legitimacy as sovereign of France to a people who were more sensitive than ever to symbolic images in those troubled times. **MM**

Notes and acknowledgements

(1) Charles VI remained King of France from 1380 to 1422. He went

mad in 1392, but enjoyed many periods of lucidity until the end of his reign.

(2) Extract quoted by Michel Fleury in the magazine *Archéologia*.

(3) Extract quoted by Michel Fleury in the catalogue accompanying the exhibition 'Royal helmets, late 14th-early 15th centuries' held at Les Invalides from 9 February to 15 March 1989 and organised by the Department of Weapons and Armoury of the Army Museum. The accounts of the king's equerry of 1411 are preserved in the National Archives under classification KK 35, folio 18.

The author would like to express his sincere thanks to Michel Fleury, vice-president of the Commission du Vieux-Paris and the person responsible for the excavations of the Cour Carrée; to Jean-Luc Godard, photographer and archaeologist of the Commission; and to Anne-Marie Rogée from the communications service of the Army Museum, for all the help that they have given him.

Uniforms of the Boer Forces, 1899-1902 (1)

ERWIN A. SCHMIDL
Paintings by PETER DENNIS

The image of the Boer volunteers who fought the British Army – with such deadly effect – in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign has always been ill-defined in this country. A few often-published photographs leave us with a general picture of bearded frontiersmen in civilian costume, slung about with bandoliers. In fact a great deal of recorded detail of their uniforms, costume, equipment and insignia is available from South African sources; and in a two-part article the Austrian historian Dr. Erwin Schmidl describes and illustrates the broad range of field clothing which characterised these most formidable of Imperial Britain's colonial enemies.

The two Boer republics – the Orange Free State (Oranje Vrystaat, OVS) and the South African Republic/Transvaal (Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek, ZAR) – had no standing, uniformed armies with the exception of artillery and police units (which will be dealt with in the second half of this article). Instead, their military organisation was based on the 'commando

system': all citizens between the ages of 16 and 60 were liable for military service when called up. The lowest electoral unit, the *wyk* (ward), formed the basis of enlistment, having a 'field-cornet' (captain) as chief military officer. Up to six wards made up a *commando*, the smallest operational unit. In 1899 there were 21 *commandos* in the Transvaal and 18 in the Free State⁽¹⁾. Roughly equal to a battalion, a *commando* consisted of up to 1,000 men commanded by an elected *commandant* (lieutenant-colonel). For guerrilla warfare the *commandos* were rather smaller, rarely numbering more than 200 men.



Above right:

Two young Boers, J.A. Joubert and J. Malan, proudly pose in a Pretoria studio in the pre- or early war period. Both are armed with Steyr-Groedel rifles and single-loop bandoliers, while the man on the left also carries what appears to be a Webley revolver in a holster secured by a narrow belt. His *commando* wears a rolled and slung blanket or greatcoat, which he will need – his military-style *klans* is made of a thin khaki drill. Note the *hais*; the tie (left) and watch-chain (right); and the boots and leather gaiters. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)

For major operations several *commandos* were united under a general. Generals were elected in the Free State and appointed in the Transvaal. In the Transvaal only there was a peacetime *commandant-generaal* who was responsible for both military and native affairs. Decisions were usually arrived at in a democratic way through war councils.

The *commando* system had its weaknesses, however, and from 1894 onward uniformed volunteer corps of part-time soldiers were established in the Transvaal on the British colonial model. These corps were dissolved by the Transvaal Volksraad at the beginning of 1899, however, so their colourful uniforms fall outside the scope of this article. Many former volun-

Right:

Boers leaving for the front from Pretoria Station, 25 January 1900: a drawing by Johann Schouberg, an Austrian-born artist working for the British publication *The Sphere*. Among interesting details in this crowd of variously-dressed Boers are the different types of bandolier; the coat-of-arms badges worn on some of the hats; the second waist-bandolier worn by the central figure talking to the dark-blue-uniformed stationmaster of the Netherlands-South African Railway Co. (NZASM); and the bed-rolls. (Reproduced by courtesy the Afrikaans Museum, Johannesburg)





Captions to colour plates overleaf:

(1) This burgher is armed with a Stryker-Gardes rifle (called 'Ghiedie' by the Boers). His battered civilian clothes, collarless shirt and simple 'field-shoes' mark him as a 'poor white' – which says nothing about his fighting qualities, however. (Composite from drawings, contemporary photographs and original items preserved in various South African collections).

(2) A youthful Boer whose nationality is shown by the Transvaal coat-of-arms badge on his hat, pinned onto a green rorkade. His hairband, striped yellow-green-red-white-blue-yellow, appears to be a 'combination puggaree', combining the Transvaal's green and the Free State's yellow with the common (Dutch) colours of red-white-blue. (From an actual example preserved at the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein).

(3) Not all Boers presented a 'hill-billy' appearance; many urban citizens were educated, often spoke better English than Dutch, and would not have looked out of place at a fashionable social event in Britain. This Boer (possibly from Johannesburg, or a member of a German corps) is a good example, wearing a straw hat and elegant light-grey jacket. Only the strap of the water bottle betrays his involvement in the war. Note the ribbon in the Transvaal colours – green-red-white-blue – worn in a bow rorkade on his lapel. (From contemporary photograph).

(4,4A) Commandant D.S. Lubbe of Jacobsdal wore a colourful 'fantasy' uniform made from sand-coloured corduroy with blue and orange braiding, together with a sash (probably of orange colour) embellished with a Free State coat-of-arms badge. While similar braided jackets, closed by means of hook-and-eye fastenings, were also popular with British colonial units at the time, the significance of the three chevrons (left arm only) is unclear: chevrons were usually worn by non-commissioned officers, but Lubbe's rank was equal to a lieutenant-colonel. This pre-1899 uniform is now kept in the War Museum in Bloemfontein (Inv. 11881 A); the hat and sash were reconstructed from a contemporary photograph in the A.B. Wainwright Collection. In his right hand Lubbe holds a sjambok whip.

(5) A number of Boers wore sturdy leather clothes, the jackets often being cut like military uniforms: evidently the big outside pockets with flaps had much to recommend them. The colour of these items varied from light fawn to a dark reddish brown. Under his jacket, this man wears a cartridge vest of khaki material, with 22 pouches holding 110 rounds of Mauser ammunition. (From original items at the Military Museum in Bloemfontein and the Voortrekker Museum in Pietermaritzburg). The improvised rorkade in the Free State colours – yellow, red, white and blue – is a typical addition. (From an original in the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg).

(6) An officer of one of the foreign volunteer units, this 'assistant field-cornet' (first lieutenant) wears his rank insignia of two six-pointed stars on the collar of a Norfolk jacket. His hat badge (the Transvaal coat-of-arms) and striped hairband were fairly common among European professional soldiers, who felt uneasy about fighting without a proper uniform. Our officer is armed with a Webley revolver, although in action he would probably carry a Mauser carbine and bandolier as well. The red breeches were commonly worn, while his expensive gaiters made from snake-skin were obviously a rare luxury. His attitude is that of a European gentleman caught up in an African war – many Boers found the Europeans' haughty behaviour wildly amusing, if not provoking, while many Europeans showed little understanding for the Boers' decision to suppress the sale of liquor during the war. (A composite from several photographs of German, Dutch and Scandinavian volunteers. The dark blue hairband, with narrow bands of green, red, white and blue in the centre, is copied from Cmdt. C. van Louis Botha's hat, which is now in the National Military History Museum in Johannesburg. Similar snake-skin gaiters are on view at the Vryheid Local Museum in Natal).

(7) A black African servant carrying his masters' equipment. Blacks usually wore the same dress as whites, but often of inferior or 'rust-off' quality. This boy wears typical civilian clothing, although photographs show that blacks often wore without shirts. The Mauser carbine and cloth bandolier with leather

flaps were typical of the equipment of the foreign volunteers: as they usually arrived some time after the outbreak of the war, the better Mauser rifles as well as the all-leather bandoliers had already been given to the burghers. Although the black servant would accompany his Boer master into the defensive position, he would only occasionally take up the rifle himself. In addition, this man carries two different water bottles and a bag, as well as two additional bandoliers and a pair of saddle-bags. (From several photographs and actual examples of equipment preserved in South African and British museums).

(8) A typical Boer of the guerrilla phase of the war, possibly one of Krüger's commandos. Sgt. Arnt of Thurneyroff's Mounted Infantry, who was captured by Krüger's men towards the end of 1900 and accompanied his commando for two weeks, recorded that the commando's three 'squadrons' were marked by coloured puggarees. This Boer has been prudent enough to remove all regimental insignia and chevrons from his khaki jacket in the hope of avoiding being shot as a spy if captured. He has even adorned the jacket with a small ribbon bow in the Transvaal colours. His bandolier and Lee-Metford rifle were from the same source as his jacket, officers' leather breeches and Schwaiger gaiters. Thus better equipped than most Boers of that time, this man examines the Mark and red siderap he has just taken from some unlucky soldier of Thurneyroff's Mounted Infantry. (From written sources, and photographs. The ribbon is from an example in the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria, while a TMI side rap is preserved at the MOH Museum in Durban.)

(9) This head was copied from a photograph of Boer prisoners after Cronje's surrender at Paardeberg in February 1900. The white feather in the hat is a rharwaristis emblem, while light-coloured scarves were also often worn – they figure prominently in some photographs of Irish volunteers.

Above:

A Transvaal burgher in 1899, dressed in simple, mainly dark civilian clothes and armed with a Martini-Henry; the single-loop bandolier carries 50 rounds. (Detail from contemporary photograph, courtesy A.B. Wainwright)

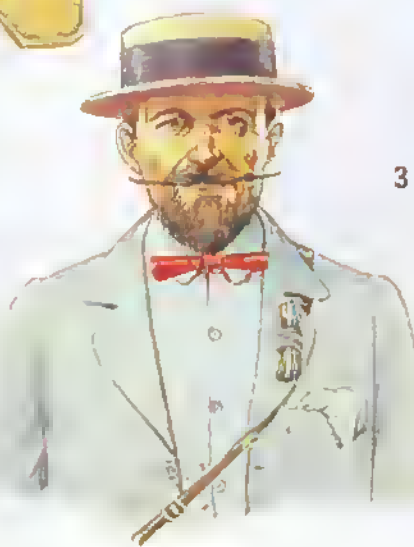
Left:

A Transvaal burgher, showing the characteristic combination of battered civilian dress and modern Mauser rifle; the leather bandolier holding 12x5 = 60 rounds is of a very common type. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)

teer soldiers took part in the Boer War, usually in the local commandos or with one of the foreign corps, but not as uniformed bodies.

At the outbreak of war there were 289,000 whites and 755,000 non-whites in

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Posed Boer group, apparently near Spinn Kop in January 1900; the variation in ages is as notable as the variety of costume and handiwork. Most have Mausers, but the young man in the foreground and the man at far right both have Sney-Cordes rifles; third from right has a captured Lee-Metford and British mounted infantry-style hankeliers. Note three barefoot Africans sitting in the background on the sandbags protecting the shelter. (Trimmel Collection, courtesy Mrs. R. Ulrich, Vienna)

Right: Cdt. I. Ferreira of Ladybrand (seated) and Field-Cornet J.C. van Rooyen, photographed in 1897 armed with the then-brand new Tumm Mauser rifles. Both have sashes, while Van Rooyen wears a fancy uniform, possibly blazer, with hussar-style banding. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)



continued from page 21

the Transvaal, and 78,000 whites and 130,000 non-whites in the Free State. A list compiled by British intelligence in 1902 arrived at a total of 89,375 Boer combatants (43,406 from the Transvaal, 29,569 from the Free State, 13,000 Cape rebels and 3,400 foreigners). These were overestimates: there were never more than 40,000 Boer combatants at any given time.

Most burghers were mounted. For transport, each commando had its own collection of ox wagons which at night were arranged in a defensive *laager*. Often the women accompanied their menfolk on commando; and at least 10,000 – possibly many more – black African and Coloured servants, known as *agterryers* ('after-riders') followed the commandos as servants.

Although on a smaller scale than the British, the Boers also occasionally employed non-whites as combatants.

CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND UNIFORMS

Most Boers on commando wore civilian clothes, usually dark-coloured jackets and waistcoats. As these dark 'civvies' blended well with the ground, they even offered better concealment than the early British khaki drill uniforms, which were too pale and reflected the sun too easily, thus betraying their wearers' presence. The Boers sometimes fired the grass in front of their defensive positions to make their adversaries more visible against the blackened earth. The darker brown- or green-tinged khaki uniforms which were introduced during the war allowed for better camouflage (and were also more durable).

In hot areas like Mafeking shirts were often worn without jackets. Most Boers wore robust trousers (sometimes of leather or corduroy) over field shoes (*veldskoene*), or breeches with boots or leg-

gings. The broad-brimmed hats sometimes had green-coloured undersides, similar to the green linings of tropical helmets. Often one side of the brim was turned up – usually the right-hand side, whereas the British usually wore the left brim turned up, but this was by no means a firm rule.

Sashes and rank badges

The burghers were not really immune to the glamour of uniforms. In 1898 a group of Transvaal officers asked for a distinctive uniform or at least a sash so that they could be distinguished from their men. Cmdt. Gen. Piet Jonbert (1831-1900) responded that although uniforms had so far not been worn by commando officers, nobody would object to a sash or some other sign worn on a voluntary basis ⁽²⁾. Photos show that sashes and similar signs were worn at least when posing for photographs. The sashes varied in colour, the obvious choice being green in the Transvaal and orange or yellow in the Free State, sometimes with narrow red-white-blue stripes along the edges. In the Transvaal some

officers copied the artillery officers' badges of rank: stars worn on the collar, Austrian fashion. Some burgher officers, especially in the Free State in the pre-war days, even wore fancy military-style jackets.

Ribbons and puggarees

Some burghers sported ribbons and hatbands in the Transvaal or Free State colours. Photographs show colourful feathers, 'charms' and cockades on their hats and jackets, as well as regimental badges and other trophies taken from captured or killed British soldiers.

Many Boers wore coloured puggarees. Free State units occasionally had orange hatbands. Some Transvaal units, including Daniel J. Theron's scouting corps, wore blue puggarees with white polka-dots. In the Cape a white puggaree was said to be the sign of a 'Cape rebel', i.e. a British subject sympathising with the Boers. This was no universal practice, however: when British Maj. John M. Valleutin raised a corps of volunteers in the Heidelberg (Transvaal) area in 1901, these 'Nigel Mine Guards' were derisively called 'wit-koppe' after their white hatbands by those

Boers still on commando⁽³⁾. Reputedly, the Irish and Italian volunteers wore green puggarees and cock-feathers, while the men of the Middelburg commando wore red feathers in their hats. Red puggarees were probably rarely worn, as these had traditionally been used by Britain's locally raised colonial forces.

Sometimes puggarees denoted units or sub-units. When Cmdt., later Gen. Pieter Hendrik Kritzinger's commando operated in Cape Colony in 1901, his three 'squadrons' were marked by white, yellow and no puggarees respectively, being known as *wit-koppen* ('white-heads'), *geel-koppen* ('yellow-heads') and *kaal-koppen* ('bareheads').

To mark their status as combatants the burghers were issued with metal hatbadges. These showed the national coat-of-arms, and were usually fixed to the turned-up brim of the hat. Some appear to have come from stocks of the artillery forces while others were apparently home-made.

Weapons and equipment

Until 1899 the standard arm had been a Martini-Henry type breech-loading rifle (cal.

11.4mm); most were made in Britain by Westley Richards. The Free State had 12,160 of these in 1899, and the Transvaal 21,142. More modern rifles were the Steyr-Guedes M1885/86 (cal. 8mm), of which over 6,000 had been supplied to both Boer republics from Austria via Portugal; and the Norwegian Krag-Jorgensen M1894 (cal. 6.5mm) of which only 100, manufactured under licence by Steyr of Austria, had been bought by the Transvaal. In addition, the republics had some 3,000 British Lee-Metford rifles, as well as small numbers of American Winchester and Austrian Mannlichers.

All these rifles were used during the war, but the most famous 'Boer rifle' was certainly the Mauser M1896 (cal. 7mm), of which the Transvaal had bought some 37,000 and the Free State 13,000. There were three basic versions. The rifle was 1.23m long and weighed 3.8kg. The carbine weighed only 3.2kg and was 95cm long, but was less accurate than the rifle at longer distances. A third model was the so-called *plezier-Mauser* ('pleasure Mauser'), an improved hunting version of the rifle 1.19m in length and easily recognis-

able by its shortened forestock⁽⁴⁾.

When Mauser ammunition became scarce in late 1900, old Martini-Henry rifles were supplied to the Boers. In 1901 many Mausers were burned because there was no more ammunition. Thus, the 'typical' Boer rifle of the guerrilla war was the British Lee-Metford or Lee-Enfield of .303in. (7.69mm) calibre. Some ammunition could be found around British campsites or along the trail of British columns, the cartridges often falling out of worn bandoliers. In addition, British prisoners could always be counted upon as a source of both weapons and ammunition. In January 1902 Gen. Jan C. Smuts (1870-1950) was delighted to note that 'all our rifles and guns, all our ammunition, our horses, saddles and bridles, even some of our clothes are supplied courtesy of Lord Kitchener'. Gen. Jacobus Herenles ('Kaas') de la Rey (1847-1914) added that the Boers would lack ammunition only if Britain stopped sending further supplies to South Africa⁽⁵⁾.

Officers had rifles, pistols or revolvers of various kinds – including Webley revolvers (some bought before the war, some taken from the British) and modern German Mauser pistols, the latter often complete with the famous wooden holsters doubling as stocks. With the exception of the artillery and some foreigners no officers wore swords, although some, like Smuts, adopted British Sam Browne belts.

Ammunition was usually carried in bandoliers. The traditional type had single loops, sometimes arranged in groups of five or ten covered with flaps to prevent the

Group of Boers ready to go on 'brandwag' (watch duty): Natal, late 1899. Note various ammunition bandoliers, water bottles, greatcoats and blanket rolls, some of the latter with carrying straps. All carry Mausers, the man at right foreground the longer 'pleasure-Mauser' sporting rifle with shortened forestock. (Wilhelm Valleutin, *Der Burenkrieg*, Vol. 1 (Wald-Solingen & Leipzig: Rheinisches Verlagshaus, 1903), p.65)



rounds from falling out. Most bandoliers carried 50, later 60 rounds. The Mauser ammunition was usually carried in clips of five rounds for easy reloading, and these clips fitted into small pouches, of which 12 were mounted on a bandolier, allowing for 60 rounds. Some combatants also had waistbelts with ammunition pouches, while a few had apron-like ammunition-holding vests. In addition, most Boers carried a water bottle of some kind, a haversack, knife and other accoutrements. Officers often had binoculars. Another important item was wire-cutters, which had at one stage been issued by the Free State government to allow the commandos to cut fences swiftly.

FOREIGN VOLUNTEERS

Although the foreign citizens living in the Transvaal were not called up for military service in October 1899 (foreigners were occasionally forced to join commandos in the Free State), many non-British *uitlanders* were sympathetic with the Boers' cause and formed 'volunteer corps'. The German and the Hollander Corps were the largest, numbering nearly 500 men at the outbreak of the war. There were also Irish, American, Scandinavian, French, Italian, Russian and Austro-Hungarian units, usually consisting of less than 100 men and often attached to Boer commandos.

In late 1899 and early 1900 a number of foreign volunteers arrived from overseas; and there even were plans to unite the often troublesome foreigners into a 'foreign legion'. Contemporary British intelligence sources estimated the number of foreign volunteers at some 3,400; the actual number might have been rather smaller. A number of these foreigners had had military training in their own countries. They did not receive pay, but were equipped and supplied at government expense.

These volunteers were

often equipped in a more or less 'uniform' manner. In September 1899, for example, Col. Adolf Schiel (1858-1903) ordered 300 full sets of uniforms for his (Johannesburg) German Corps. Each man was to receive a hat, jacket, breeches, gaiters, boots, blanket, raincoat, two shirts and two pairs of socks, in addition to saddle and equipment. The men had Mauser rifles while the officers were to be equipped with Webley revolvers.⁽⁶⁾ The German volunteers from Pretoria left the Transvaal capital on 6 October 1899, 'neatly dressed in light khaki uniforms', although even the Germans never achieved a completely uniform appearance. The Scandinavians and Dutch appear to have been more 'uniformed' than, for example, the Irish volunteers. Like some burghers, many foreigners favoured hunting jackets of more or less khaki colour, often cut like the British Norfolk jacket. Col. J.N.C. Rutherford noted that Capt. Johannes C. A. Flygare (1863-1899), the commander of the Scandinavian Corps killed in action at Magersfontein like many of his countrymen, made a fine impression in his 'Norfolk jacket, white corduroy riding breeches and tan coloured Wellington boots. All these Scandinavians were much better dressed and much finer looking fellows than the Boers I have seen'⁽⁷⁾.

CAPTURED UNIFORMS

In the early months of the war many Boers immediately took to wearing captured British khaki uniforms. In his memoirs Dr. Wolfgang Schiele, a German who had fought with the Boers, described how four British prisoners escaped with ease because so many Boers in the camp wore khaki uniforms.

While this was initially more a matter of fashion, after the defeat of the regular Boer forces in 1900 many Boers simply had to wear British khaki uniforms when they lost their own sources of supply. On numerous occa-



sions the Boers stripped their prisoners (whom they could not keep with them, anyway) before setting them free. After an encounter near Klipriversberg on 12 February 1902, for example, over 50 captured British soldiers were stripped of all clothes

and had to return to Elandsfontein, south of Heidelberg, stark naked. The British dead were also stripped; and Louis Slabbert, a Boer, remembered the 'ghastly panorama of naked bodies [which] lay strewn about the veld. The total was exactly 90, of



Group of German Volunteer Corps officers near Ladysmith, November 1899. Four appear to wear the khaki uniform, similar to British issue, which was obtained for the Corps that October. The four men on the left carry the short Mauser carbine characteristic of foreign units. Von Hirtzenka (seated, left foreground) has applied small metal 'Transvaal' coat-of-arms badges to his collar. Lt. Grothaus (standing, second from right), in khaki tunic, Sam Browne, and very dark trousers tucked into short gaiters, has a revolver in an open holster and also braces on his thigh a 'broonhandle' Mauser with wooden holster-stock. Both officers seem to have narrow dark (black or blue?) Austrian-style shoulder straps. Extreme right is Dr. Elsberger, with regulation red cross brassard; he seems to have fixed a small, red-enameled cross to the puggaree of his small pith helmet. Lt. von Zekowski (seated, right foreground) seems to wear a sash over his right shoulder (possibly dark green with narrow red-white-blue centre stripes). An unreliable drunkard, he later surrendered to the British; his offer to raise a volunteer corps for Baden-Powell was not taken up. (Wilhelm Vallenin, *Der Burenkrieg*, Vol.1, p.48)

Below:

Although blurred, this photograph of Dr. H.J. Coster inspecting a unit of the Dutch volunteer *Hollanderkorps* does clearly illustrate a uniformly equipped and professional-looking military force. The khaki-uniformed troopers have carbines and bandoliers; their horses carry remarkably little field equipment, compared with those of British mounted infantry units. The man at extreme right has a soft-topped, small-crowned peaked cap, popular as a civilian sports cap in those days. (Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria)



the signing of the peace treaty of Vereeniging on 31 May 1902, 'the appearance of riders and horses betrayed the rigours of the war. Most wear untanned ox- or buck-hide jackets and home-made mocassin-like *veldskoene*. A great number is dressed in khaki', as the Austro-Hungarian consul, Baron Siegfried Pitner, reported⁽¹⁰⁾. Sometimes even black Africans serving with the Boers were dressed in khaki uniforms.

Occasionally, however, khaki uniforms were worn on purpose to deceive British troops, to reconnoitre, or to find out the sentiments of the civilian population. In one well-publicised incident a British officer was killed by a

whom a few were wounded and the rest all dead . . . Thanks to the plunder the commando was once more well equipped with clothing, horses, rifles and ammunition⁽⁸⁾.

These acts resulted from need, not from a desire to

humiliate the enemy, especially during the bitterly cold winter months. Christian de Wet (1854-1922), the famous Free State general, remarked that the custom of *uitschudden* (stripping) was 'against orders', but stressed that 'the English had begun by taking

away, or burning, the clothes which the burghers had left in their houses'⁽⁹⁾. Gen. 'Koos' de la Rey reported in December 1901 that most Boers had to wear rags taken from tents or were wrapped in animal pelts. When the last Boers rode into Pretoria after

Boer in full khaki uniform who had shouted 'Don't fire, we are 17th Lancers!'⁽¹⁾. Even if active deception was not intended, Boers wearing khaki uniforms were often mistaken for friendly colonial troops by other British soldiers – often with fatal results, especially after the British began increasingly to discard their cumbersome helmets in exchange for more comfortable slouch hats. Understandably, the British showed little sympathy for Boers in khaki uniforms, and from 1901 any Boer caught wearing khaki risked being shot as a spy. Paragraph 15 of the Martial Law Regulations stated that 'no unauthorised person may wear any article of military uniform, or any jacket or trousers of a khaki colour calculated to have the appearance of a military uniform'. To avoid such a fate, Louis Slabbert recalled, the burghers 'had strict instructions to cut all military insignia off the khakies' uniforms [sic] before donning them. This included shoulder flashes, buttons and all military paraphernalia'. In any case, when these regulations became known many Boers changed back into civilian clothes.

mish (1), Heilbron (2), Hoopstad (2), Jacobsdal (1), Kroonstad (3), Ladybrand (2), Philippolis (2), Rinxville (2), Vrede (2), Wepener (1), Wimpburg (5).

- (2) Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria: SS 7353, R 9891/98.
- (3) Ian Uys, *Heidelbergers of the Boer War* (Hridelberg: Ian Uys, 1981), 154f.
- (4) The standard work on Boer firearms, recommended to anyone interested, is Felix Lategan and Lucas Poigier, *Die Boer se Rye tot Vindag: Die Ontwikkeling van die Vuurwapen in Suid-Afrika* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2nd revised edition 1982).
- (5) *Ähnliche Berichte . . . sowie andere Urkunden aus dem Südafrikanischen Krieg*, ed. A. Schowalter (München 1902), 1/8 and 11/10.
- (6) Transvaal Archives Depot, Pretoria: KG 1139, 41–43, 51f, 71.
- (7) Alan H. Winkler, *Scandinavians and South Africa: Their impact on the cultural, social and economic development of pre-1902 South Africa* (Cape Town - Rotterdam: Balkema, 1978), 170.
- (8) Uys, *Heidelbergers*, 188, 191.
- (9) Christian Rudolf de Wet, *Three Years War (October 1899 - June 1902)* (Westminster: Constable, 1902), 288f.
- (10) *Ähnliche Berichte . . . 1/8: Pinner's report Z.81*, dated 13 June 1902 (Hans-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna: PA 38/323).
- (11) Denys Reitz, *Criminals: A Boer Journal of the Boer War* (Reprint Jonathan Ball, Johannesburg, 1983), 250.

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The number of books on the Anglo-Boer War is nearly endless. An excellent introduction is Frans Johan Pretorius, *The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902* (Cape Town: Don Nelson, 1985); while *The South African War: The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*, edited by Peter Warwick and S.B. Spies (London: Longman, 1980) offers insights into subjects hitherto often neglected. On the popular side, the recent book by Michael Barthorp (*The Anglo-Boer Wars*, London-New York-Sydney: Blandford, 1987) contains many useful photographs. Maj. G. Tylden's *The Armed Forces of South Africa* (Johannesburg: Africana Museum and Trophy Press, reprint 1982) is still a most useful handbook.

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GALLERY

David Crockett

STEPHEN L. HARDIN

Paintings by RICHARD SCOLLINS

This column is usually devoted – as regular 'M' readers will be aware – to a brief summary of the career of some famous military figure, and to a reconstruction of one or more of his uniforms or other costume. In this issue we depart from normal custom to give Dr. Hardin the space to recount the whole detective-story behind our reconstructions of the appearance of one of the larger-than-life figures of American folklore. 'Davy' Crockett, who died heroically at the Alamo of 6 March 1836, is an excellent example of the difficulties which face anyone who attempts to pin down the actual appearance of an historical figure.



To be continued: Part 2 will deal with uniformed corps such as police and artillery units.

Notes:

(1) According to J.H. Breyerbach's *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog in Suid-Afrika, 1899-1902*, Vol. 1 (Pretoria: Staatsdrukker, 1978), 33ff, the following commandos existed in 1899 (number of wards given in brackets): Transvaal: Bethal (2), Bloemhof (3), Carolina (3), Ermelo (3), Heidelberg (4), Krugersdorp (3), Lichtenburg (3), Lydenburg (4), Marico (4), Middelburg (5), Piet Reifel (2), Putschersdorp (6), Pretoria (6), Rustenburg (4), Standerton (3), Uirreth (3), Vryheid (4), Wakkerstroom (3), Waterberg (3), Wolmaransstad (2), Zompansberg (6). In addition there was a special commandant appointed for Johannesburg. Free State: Bethlehem (2), Bethulie (2), Bloemfontein (5), Boshof (2), Calcuttawir (2), Laresmish (4), Ficksburg (1), Harrys-

Although a failure in many of his endeavours, as an image-maker David Crockett was enormously successful. In his 1823 bid for election to the Tennessee state legislature he branded his opponent, Dr. William E. Butler, a blue-blooded patrician, while he assumed the rôle of a 'genuine son of the West' – a self-made man of the people. Crockett was inventing a political persona, as he explained:

If had] me a large buckskin

Crockett on the stump. Donning the hunting shirt he had fashioned to bolster his image as a backwoods egalitarian, candidate Crockett regales the constituency with the humorous anecdotes for which he became famous. The illustration is from the 1869 edition of A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett. (Prints and Photograph Collection, Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas at Austin)

hunting-shirt made, with a couple of pockets holding about a peck each; and in one I would



Anthony Lewis DeRose, David Crockett, 1834. Realising that the gentleman's clothing he habitually wore did little to bolster his emerging backwoods persona, Crockett complained that this and previous portraits depicted him as 'a sort of cross between a clean-shirted Member of Congress and a Methodist Preacher.' (*The New York Historical Society*)

man' and his dress and appearance 'not unlike the simple manner of many of the clergy.' In the same year Crockett sat for Anthony Lewis DeRose's watercolour, which shows the congressman in the same ensemble. Contrary to his public image, the man was something of a backwoods Beau Brummell.

Crockett, however, was concerned that his existing portraits failed to reflect his ever-growing persona as the 'Lion of the West', who could whip his weight in wildcats. Indeed, he complained to

DeRose that he had painted him as 'a sort of cross between a clean-shirted Member of Congress and a Methodist Preacher', an image that he realised would not be regarded kindly among his cash-poor constituents back home. The desire for a portrait that would bolster his appeal to the common man caused him to seek out artist John Gadsby Chapman.

Crockett explained to Chapman in no uncertain terms the kind of painting he wanted: he wished to be depicted as if he were 'on a bear hunt in a "harricane" [sic].' Chapman began to scour Washington to locate the backwoods props and costumes he needed. Crockett proved difficult to please, insisting that all of the rifles

which Chapman provided were too fancy to suit his taste. Ultimately, however, dogs proved harder to secure than a suitably worn firearm. The congressman was not jesting when he told Chapman that he wanted to be portrayed as if on a bear hunt, and that required a pack of hounds – and not just any hounds, Crockett insisted, but exactly the kind of curs which were to be found in Tennessee. But all the attention to detail paid off, and Chapman's finished canvas emerged, if not an artistic triumph, then most certainly a masterpiece of public relations.

Not everyone was fooled. In his review of the painting one New York reporter saw through the charade and wryly noted that the face in the portrait had 'less of a rug-

Richard Scollins' reconstruction opposite illustrates (right) the hunting costume that Crockett wore on 2 November 1835, the day he left Memphis, Tennessee bound for Texas. With the exception of accessories, the illustration follows the Chapman portrait; but all reports indicate that Crockett wore a coonskin cap that day. Like many hunters, he preferred a linen hunting shirt – those made of buckskin remained clammy when wet and intensified the cold. The leggings, however, are buckskin. The shot pouch is made of panther skin, its flap from the tail. Overall, note that southern hunting garb of the 1830s reflected a marked simplicity, lacking the long fringes and Indian headwork which characterised the attire of Western mountain men in the following decade.

The figure on the left reconstructs the 'gentleman's' apparel that Crockett was reported wearing on the final day of the siege of the Alamo, including the 'coat with cups in it' described by Beecroft. Note also that in an age when American fashion dictated that gentlemen wore predominantly dark clothing, a light or highly coloured waistcoat was the only means by which a man might assert his individuality within the bounds of taste.

Few, if coarse, wore a coonskin cap with formal dress; but there is primary documentation that on occasion Crockett did just that. Isabella Clark, whom Crockett visited en route to the Alamo, stressed that the congressman was 'dressed like a gentleman, and not a backwoodsman', but nevertheless affirmed that 'he did wear a coonskin cap.' Since such a cap, described as his, was found inside the Alamo after the battle, it is entirely likely that Crockett did wear such unorthodox headgear on that last day, notwithstanding Mexican reports that he was 'well dressed'.

gedness than one would expect in the bear-hunter, but whether his fault or the artist's, we are not advised.'

CROCKETT AT THE ALAMO

With regard to Crockett's dress at the Alamo, most agree that he was the living image of the rustic frontier leatherstocking. He is thus depicted in the portraits in the shrine itself, in various film versions of the battle, and even in the most recent serious works of scholarship. Indeed, the image of 'Davy' in coonskin cap and fringed buckskins, swinging his

David Crockett

Memphis, 2 November 1835

The Alamo, 6 March 1836



empty rifle against a horde of on-coming Mexicans, has retained an honoured place in Texas iconography. Nearly everyone has agreed with this description – except those who were present at the Alamo and who actually saw what Crockett wore.

Because his name was so well known, Crockett had attracted considerable attention on his way to San Antonio de Bexar. True to type, he began the first leg of his trip in a costume suited to his image as an adventuresome frontiersman. In 1882 his daughter recalled her father's attire on 2 November 1835, as he left Memphis bound for Texas: 'He was dressed in his hunting suit, wearing a coonskin cap, and carried a fine rifle presented to him by friends in Philadelphia'. While no doubt correct regarding her father's attire, she was mistaken in reporting that Crockett took the Philadelphia presentation rifle to Texas. That weapon – the one he called 'Pretty Betsy' – is currently housed in the Smithsonian Institution. Journalist James D. Davis also witnessed Crockett's departure and noted his 'coonskin cap and hunting shirt'. Making a good exit, Crockett apparently donned his hunting garb the better to please the hometown crowd. Even so, some authorities maintain that this was the first time in his life that the congressman had ever actually worn a fur cap.

Away from his former constituents, however, he relegated the buckskins to his saddle bags and resumed his customary attire. Isabella Clark of Clarksville, Texas – described as a 'good-looking blond[e] who made herself into a kind of one-woman chamber of commerce reception committee for distinguished visitors' – was not about to miss a celebrity of Congressman Crockett's reputation. She was not disappointed. 'He was dressed like a gentleman when he came to Texas', Mrs. Clark primly observed, 'and neither his bearing or his conversation created the impression

that he was ignorant and uncouth.'

Continuing their journey, Crockett and the Tennessee Mounted Volunteers spent a night at the Mitchell family farm in present Washington County. They made a lasting impression on the young Nathan Mitchell, who in 1897 clearly remembered Crockett's appearance. 'The portrait of Colonel Crockett now on exhibition in the Alamo well represents this brave and noble soldier as I recollect him', Mitchell reported, 'except that he did not wear a buckskin suit of clothes.'

A number of Mexican combatants also mentioned Crockett's clothing. Sergeant Francisco Becerra recalled that the 'gentleman . . . called Crockett had on a coat with capes to it.' Although not a complete description, this seemed to indicate a 'redingote', a type of long, double-breasted topcoat with a cape sewn over the shoulders. Also called a 'carriack', this style had been popular in England since at least the 1820s. In *Gaslight and Daylight* (1859) the English writer George Augustus Sala, yearning for days past, was far more descriptive:

Where is the great coat – the long, voluminous, wide-skirted garment of brown or drab broad cloth, reaching to the ankle, possessing unnumbered pockets: pockets for bottles, pockets for sandwiches, secret pockets for cash, and side-pockets for bank-notes? This venerable garment had a cap, which, in wet or snowy weather . . . you turned over your head.

Crockett had such a coat. In 1834 he had visited a New England wool mill, and out of admiration, or in an attempt to curry favour, the mill owners sent him a wool overcoat. Robert I. Chester, one of Crockett's political rivals, visited him in his home afterward and recounted how 'Crockett boasted a great deal about a coat made from American wool sent him from New England.'

It is likely that the 'coat with capes to it' was the same

one given him by the New England textile manufactures in 1834. After all, by March 1836 the coat would have seen only two winters' wear and would still have been serviceable. As Sala observed: 'A new great coat was an event – a thing to be remembered as happening once or so in a lifetime.' If it were indeed the prized possession that Chester claimed, Crockett may well have taken it with him to Texas. In addition, the early morning hours of 6 March were quite chilly; he would have needed a warm overcoat as he defended the palisade in front of the chapel. American artist Eric von Schmidt, in the most carefully researched Alamo painting to date, accurately depicted Crockett in the type of period carriack topcoat described by Becerra and Chester.

Other Mexicans who were present confirmed that Crockett was not wearing hunting garb. While a captive of the Texans after the Battle of San Jacinto, General Perfecto de Cós told Dr. George M. Patrick that Crockett was one of those who survived the fighting only to be summarily executed on the command of General López de Santa Anna. Cós described Crockett as a 'fine-looking and well-dressed man.' Lieu-

tenant-Colonel José Enrique de la Peña identified Crockett as a famous North American 'naturalist', which would tend to suggest that he made a good appearance, quite unlike an ordinary bear-hunter. Moreover, Becerra's description of Crockett as a 'gentleman' would seem to imply that he was better dressed than the rank-and-file of Alamo defenders. Since others corroborate that Crockett was 'well-dressed', that portion, at least, of Cós's account must be presumed correct.

THE COONSKIN CAP

Still to be considered is Crockett's coonskin cap which, more than anything else, came to be the sartorial symbol of 'Davy' as 'King of the Wild Frontier'. But whether or not he wore one at the Alamo, as all the movies suggest, is another matter. None of the Mexican participants referred to his headpiece, and what Texan observations we have are inconclusive.

Susanna Dickinson and her infant daughter were the only Anglo survivors of the battle. Thirty-nine years later Susanna Dickinson Hanning (she had married John W. Hanning in 1857) recalled that as she was led from the smouldering compound on





the morning of 6 March she 'recognised Col. Crockett lying dead and mutilated between the church and the two story barrack building, and even remember seeing his peculiar cap by his side.' All arguments hinge on



what she meant by the word 'peculiar'. Eric von Schmidt contends 'at the time the word "cap" only implied headgear with a visor, and 'peculiar' in this instance didn't mean odd. It merely meant the cap was Crockett's particular hat. And since in my view he didn't wear coonskin hats generally I did not take the large leap into mythology required to equate "peculiar" with "coonskin".' In his epic painting, therefore, Crockett was shown wearing a visored cap of the type popular among European immigrants of the 1830s.

Perhaps; but another interpretation is possible. By the time Mrs. Hanning furnished her account in the early 1870s, Crockett had already made the 'leap into mythology'. The buckskinned image that he had taken such lengths to foster in life had, after his death, assumed proportions that would have amazed the old yarn-spinner himself. Through a wide range of media – including actor James Hackett's portrayal of Nimrod Wildfire (a thinly veiled version of Crockett) in the stage play *Lion of the West*; Crockett's image-building campaign autobiography; the oft-reproduced Chapman portrait; and most importantly, the wildly popular *Crockett Almanac* – the 'half-horse, half-alligator' facade grew to larger-than-life proportions. Only a year after his death a sketch of the hero wearing a type of animal-skin cap graced the cover of *Davy Crockett's Almanac, of Wild Sports in the West, Life in the Backwoods, & Sketches of Texas*. In the 1870s, when Mrs. Hanning recalled the 'peculiar cap', the image of Crockett in coonskin cap and buckskins had already been ingrained in the national psyche. Mrs. Hanning, in alluding to his 'peculiar cap', probably assumed that everyone would know exactly what she meant: a coonskin cap.

Another reference to a coonskin cap came a few years after the battle. On a

Left:

John Gadsby Chapman, David Crockett, date unknown. Playing to his developing image as the 'Lion of the West', Crockett affects linen-woolsey hunting shirt and buckskin trousers to create the impression that he is 'on a bear hunt in a "harricane"'. Note that Crockett wears a wide-brimmed slouch hat, not the legendary coonskin cap. (Iconography Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin)

Below:

Robert J. Onderdonk, *The Fall of the Alamo, 1903*. This view typifies the popular perspective of Crockett as a martyred hero. (Friends of the Governor's Mansion, Austin, Texas)

visit to San Antonio de Béxar, Texas settler James Wilson Nichols saw articles retrieved from the Alamo following the fighting. Among them was a cap reputed to have been Crockett's. Nichols, in his own colourful spelling, recalled that 'Crockett's cap [was] mad[e] out of racoon skin with the hair pulled out leaving only the fur and a fox tail hanging down behind.' Many citizens of Béxar entertained Crockett before he entered the fort on 23 February. If he were one of the few defendets who wore a coonskin cap (and, contrary to the Hollywood stereotype, the evidence suggests that he was), it is probable that they could identify it as his.

By 1836 Crockett was already a celebrity, a fact of which he was well aware. In his 1834 autobiography, *A Narrative of the Life of David Crockett of the State of Tennessee*, he had observed: 'Go where I will, everybody seems anxious to get a peep at me . . . There must therefore be something in me, or about me, that attracts attention, which is even mysterious to myself.' The inexplicable 'something' that eluded Crockett was what we might today term charisma. Well into his middle years, he still cut quite a figure. Those who saw him took note of his appearance and could easily recall the more outlandish attitudes of his clothing.

The coonskin cap that

Right:

Ambrose Andrews, Mr. Hackett as 'Nimrod Wildfire', lithograph of original painting. In the early 1830s James K. Paulding's stage play *The Lion of the West* was a hit in New York, Washington, and London. The frontier comedy featured the character Nimrod Wildfire, a thinly-veiled parody of Crockett. The caption, apparently a line from the play, reads: 'Come back, stranger! or I'll plug you like a watermelon!' The congressman saw actor James Hackett portray him in Washington, and enjoyed the performance so much that he began to borrow elements of Hackett's portrayal to nurture his growing persona. There is no evidence, for example, that Crockett ever wore an animal-skin cap before he saw Hackett wear one on stage. (Harvard Theatre Collection)



Below:

Artist unknown; cover of Davy Crockett's Almanack, 1837; wood engraving, obviously copied from Andrews's stage portrait of James Hackett. Less than a year after his death the lines between myth and reality were already becoming blurred: here the image of Hackett as Nimrod Wildfire is used to represent the real Crockett. (Pruitt and Photographs Collection, Barker Texas History Center, University of Texas at Austin)

Nichols reported is the most likely candidate for Mrs. Hanning's 'peculiar cap'. There is no doubt that he left Memphis wearing one and presumably would still have had it when he rode inside the fort; such warm headgear, moreover, would have been useful on that icy morning of 6 March. Still, in the final analysis one cannot state with certainty what sort of cap the terrified widow saw on that dreadful morning. Von Schmidt has one theory; I have another. In the absence of additional primary material, both must remain conjecture.

But what of Crockett's other possessions? James Nichols also recorded, in addition to Crockett's coonskin cap, the presence of 'his shot pouch mad[e] of pan[ther]-skin with the tail for a flap', and 'old Davy Crockett's gun' that was 'broak off at the bretch and it was a very noted gun. The naked barrel weighed 18

pounds with a plate of silver let into the barrel just behind the hind sight with the name Davy Crockette engraved on it and another plate near the bretch with Druc Lane make engraved on it.' Nichols remembered that a young man who 'claimed to be a son of Davy Crocketts bought the gun and carried it off home.'

There is no way of knowing, of course, if all of the supposed Crockett mementoes were really his, but several factors suggest their authenticity. It is known that David's son, John Wesley Crockett, came to Texas after the war to confirm his father's fate. The fact that he purchased the barrel supports the notion that it was genuine; presumably he would have recognised his father's own rifle. The same might have been said of the fur cap and the pantherskin shot pouch, but it is not known if the young Crockett purchased or even saw them. It is clear, however, that the items were for sale. Nichols's father

relayed a letter to Memphis informing David's son Robert of their availability, but never received a reply. San Antonio entrepreneurs must have recognised the potential value of the cap and shot pouch, for Nichols sadly remembered seeing them once more, but being unable to afford the asking price.

The frequent misreading of a single account has done much to bolster Crockett's homespun public image. In *A Time To Stand* (1961), author Walter Lord quoted the alleged Mexican participant Felix Nunez, intimating that the man referred to could have been 'Crockett himself':

He was a tall American of rather dark complexion and had a long buckskin coat and a round cap without a bill made out of fox skin with the long tail hanging

Vol. I. 66 "Go Ahead!" No. 3.

**Davy Crockett's
IS ALMANACK, 37**

OF WILD SPORTS IN 'THE WEST',
Life in the Backwoods, & Sketches of Men.



Published by the Author, at Nashville, Tennessee.

down his buck. This man apparently had a charmed life. Of the many soldiers who took deliberate aim at him and fired, not one ever hit him. On the contrary, he never missed a shot. He killed at least eight of our men, besides wounding several others. This being observed by a lieutenant who had come on over the wall, he sprang at him and dealt him a deadly blow with his sword, just above the right eye, which felled him to the ground, and in an instant he was pierced by not less than 20 bayonets.

While many would like to believe that the intrepid marksman was David Crockett, it is clear that the man could not have been the former congressman. The hunter's dress of the 'tall American' is at variance with the 'gentleman's' clothing Becerra and Cós reported Crockett wearing. Moreover, Nunez never even mentioned Crockett by name. Most damning of all, the account is a litany of misinformation and many now believe it to be spurious; Nunez may not even have been at the battle. Even supposing that he was, the 'tall American' could have been almost any one of the defenders, all of whom probably appeared tall to the smaller Mexican *soldados*, whose average height was five feet five inches. Nor was Crockett killed in the manner Nunez described. According to an overwhelming body of evidence Crockett was captured, and executed shortly after the battle.

Lieutenant-Colonel José Enrique de la Peña provided the best account of Crockett's death. He asserted that soon after Mexican troops flooded into the Alamo chapel Crockett and six other defenders were captured. Immediately after the guns fell silent Santa Anna ventured into the vanquished fort. As he was surveying the carnage, General Manuel Fernández Castrillón brought forward Crockett and the others. The chivalrous Castrillón attempted to intercede on behalf of the defenceless prisoners, but Santa Anna answered with a 'gesture of indignation' and

ordered their immediate execution. De la Peña noted that several officers were outraged by the order and refused to enforce it; but nearby staff members who had not taken part in the fighting fell upon Crockett and the others with their swords, 'in order to flatter their commander.' De la Peña recorded that 'these unfortunates died without complaining and without humiliating themselves before their torturers'.

Perhaps it is more fitting that Crockett died out of costume. As historian Paul Andrew Hutton has observed, 'heroes are not born, they are created'. Crockett promoted himself as a backwoods egalitarian for political purposes, and he well understood the importance of clothing to that impression. Even so, that public persona at times proved a heavy burden for the private man; he complained that those he met often 'expressed the most profound astonishment at finding me in human shape, and with the countenance, appearance, and common feelings of a human being'. Hutton has further suggested that Crockett, once committed to the cause of Texas, sought to play out his part to the tragic end, thus becoming 'trapped by his own legend'. After martyrdom at the Alamo his coonskin cap and buckskin hunting garb were transformed into lasting cultural archetypes.

But the man who died at the hands of Santa Anna's staff officers on the morning of 6 March 1836 was neither a titan of mythic proportions nor a burnt-out political hack. He was an exhausted and all too mortal 49-year-old man, who had travelled hundreds of miles from his home to fight – and if necessary die – for the promise of a new life for himself and his family. Those were, in themselves, the actions of a heroic gentleman; and it was in the vestments of a gentleman that the Honourable David Crockett of Tennessee chose to meet his fate, and found his greatest glory. [M]

A Very Senior Private: 2546 Pte. James Dunston, Grenadier Guards, 1854-56

JOHN MOLLO

'Drawn to nothing and dirty as pigs' is how one officer described the appearance of the British troops who had spent the winter of 1854/5 in the trenches before Sebastopol ⁽¹⁾ – a description which fits perfectly the private of the Grenadier Guards who is the subject of a small pencil and watercolour sketch which I acquired several years ago. All the 'spit and polish' of St James's and Buckingham Palace has vanished, leaving only a figure who, were it not for the bearskin cap with its white plume, could easily be taken for a tramp in the vestiges of military clothing. Whether this drawing is a self-portrait, or the work of a comrade, it remains one of that small but invaluable group of 'soldier's' drawings which provide such useful information about how the British soldier actually looked in the field. In this case it gives us a vivid impression of the privations which the British Army suffered during the rigours of a Russian winter.

Our Grenadier is dressed as though for duty in the trenches ⁽²⁾, wearing his grey caped greatcoat, much torn and stained with what looks like dried blood, bayonet and cartouche box belts, water canteen, and haversack containing a 24-hour ration of pork and bison. Over all this he wears his blanket *en bannière*, the 'B.O.' and broad arrow mark of the Board of Ordnance being clearly visible. He has his musket slung over his left shoulder, and in his ungloved right hand he carries his mess tin. The Guards, however, were excused duty in the trenches because of the losses sustained at the Battle of Inkerman on 5 November 1854 ⁽³⁾, by which time they had already abandoned the wearing of bearskins in the trenches ⁽⁴⁾, so we must assume that our man is dressed for some other duty.

On landing in the Crimea, in September 1854, the knapsacks had been left aboard the transports, and it was not

until mid-October that they began to be delivered to some regiments ⁽⁵⁾. If their contents, much needed spare clothing in particular, were appreciated, the packs themselves, made of waterproofed canvas, were soon put to other uses; and our man has cut his up to make a pair of gaiters, the regimental badge painted on the back of the knapsack being clearly visible on the left shin.

This would appear to be the sum of the information to be gleaned from this drawing, except for one thing: pencilled on what I take to be his haversack, hanging on the left side below the rolled blanket, is the number '2546'. I had thought, ever since acquiring the picture, that this might be a clue to the subject's identity, but had not pursued the subject. Recently, however, I was talking about the drawing to David Horn, Curator of the Guards Museum and a Grenadier himself, and he kindly offered to look through the

These documents consist of two pages, the first of which gives details of Dunston's enlistment, attestation, promotions, reductions, period of service in each rank, and his total length of service. From this we learn that Dunston was enlisted in the Grenadier Regiment of Foot Guards at Bridgewater on 15 March 1832, and was attested at Maunsell in Somerset three days later, at the age of 19 years and five months. He was 'discharged' on 11 March 1856, at the age of 43 years and five months, having served one day short of 24 years, all in the rank of private. He received his first Good Conduct Mark, and a extra penny a day pay, on 14 October 1841; but forfeited it, for some undisclosed reason, in March 1844. It was restored one year later, and thereafter he received his second, third, and fourth Marks each with its penny a day increase in pay, the last

Part of the two sheets from the regimental records of the Grenadier Guards, listing the award of Dunsdon's Good Conduct Marks – see text – and apparently signed by Capt. Mountain Burgoyne, Regimental Adjutant. The second sheet makes clear that 'Discharge' in this case meant death. (Courtesy Capt. D. Horn, The Guards Museum)

The second page gives his personal description, details of 'Service Abroad', wounds etc., married status, date of discharge, and pension details. Dunston was born at Moonlinch, near Bridgewater in Somerset, and his trade is entered as 'Labourer'. He was 5ft. 10in. in height, with a fresh complexion, grey eyes, and dark hair, these last two features being faithfully portrayed in the drawing. The section headed 'Service Abroad', which should contain details of his service in the 'Army of the East', is for some reason left blank. He was unmarried, and was not 'Discharged' but died on 11 March 1856. The section headed 'Character' contains the entry 'Has received a Medal and Gratuity for Meritorious Conduct under the Warrant of 13 April 1854'. This must have been the silver medal instituted by William IV in July 1830, to be given to 'Meritorious' soldiers for 'Long Service and Good Conduct' - 21 years in the infantry and 20 in the cavalry ⁽⁶⁾.

James Dunston died 19 days before peace terms were signed, and after the British Army had spent the winter 'well-fed, well-clothed and well-sheltered with no harassing duty to perform' (7). As there is no mention of wounds in his record, we can only suppose that having survived the Alma and Inkerman in one piece, he was one of

the 15,669 other ranks who died of disease during the Crimean campaign ⁽⁸⁾. Whether or not he was removed to the General Hospital at Scutari and came under the care of Florence Nightingale we shall never know; but it would be nice to think that this old soldier ended his long years of service in some modicum of comfort.

- (1) Barrihoop, Michael, *Crimean Uniforms, British Infantry*, 122, quoting Lysons of the 23rd.
- (2) *Ibid.*, 120.
- (3) Calihorpe, Lt. Col. S.J.C., *Letters from Headquarters*, as reproduced as the text of Cadogan's *Crimée* (London: 1979), 136.
- (4) Barrihoop, *ibid.*, 120
- (5) *Ibid.*, 122
- (6) Dinnton's details are entered into pages 111 and 112 of a book of printed forms.
- (7) Calihorpe, *ibid.*, 266.
- (8) *Ibid.*, 267



No 2546 James Dunston

Enlisted for the ~~1st~~ *2nd* Regiment of *Port Guards* on the *15th March 1835*.

Arrested for the said Regiment *at Mansell's* *Winn*.

On *15th March 1836* at the Age of *18* Years and *Five* Months.

Regiment.	Promotions, Reductions, Transfers, &c.	Rank.	Period of Service in each Rank.		Amount of Service.	
			Years.	Days.		
<i>Regiment of Port Guards</i>		<i>Private</i>	<i>15 March 1835</i>	<i>11 March 1836</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>364</i>

Discharged 11 March 1836. Aged 18 3 1/2 years

Montgomery
Capt. Rgtt. 2nd Lt.

DIEN BIEN PHU

(3) Uniforms of Non-Airborne Units; Undress Headgear

DENIS LASSUS Paintings by KEVIN LYLES

The withdrawal of Airborne Group 1 (GAP 1) from the captured valley of Dien Bien Phu at the beginning of December 1953 coincided with a process of reinforcement by – eventually – ten battalions of infantry, and support and services units. This process brought Metropolitan French troops, Foreign Legion units, Colonial and French North African battalions to DBP where, with the parachute battalions which remained in place, they constituted the formation designated Operational Group North-West (GONO) commanded by Col. De Castries. All the newly-arrived units wore the uncamouflaged 'all arms' combat fatigue uniform although – as was the case among the paratroopers – it was still possible to see some items of US origin mixed in with the French issue.

US M1943 Herringbone Twill Fatigues

An exhaustive description of this very well known uniform is not necessary here. It had been, for several years, the principal fatigue and combat uniform worn by

French troops in the Far East. It was lighter and more practical than both the French M1944 battledress, modelled on the British pattern; and the French M1947 combat fatigues, modelled less closely on the US M1943 field uniform. The French did not adopt a

fabric similar to 'HBT' until around 1955, the M1947 fatigues being heavier and stiffer, and thus less well adapted to the Asian climate. In 1953–54, despite the relative standardisation of the Expeditionary Corps' uniforms, quantities of the light, comfortable herringbone twill fatigues were still used, and parts of this uniform were often seen substituting for the French equivalents.

FRENCH M1947 COMBAT DRESS

This was the standard field uniform both of French troops, and of the troops of the Associated States which were completely equipped by France. It was found in two different versions: the standard jacket and trousers (*veste and pantalon de combat mle 1947*); and the same trousers

Above:

30 April 1954: during Operation 'Condor', the attempt to relieve Dien Bien Phu overland from Laos, *légionnaires* of the 11/2^e REI celebrate Camerone. All wear the issue bush-hat, in various ways, except the sous-officier at left background. 'Lightened' M1947 jackets with or without shoulder reinforcement are worn inside or outside M1947 trousers. Two sergeants wear ranking on their pockets: foreground, the complete sleeve écusson, with rank stripes and service stripes, is fully visible and upright; background, only the rank stripes of a reversed display are visible below the pocket flap. (ECP Armées, as are all photos in this article)

Left:

A less cheerful, imposed photo of 11/2^e REI resting during their jungle march. The left hand man, probably an NCO, has a US HBT jacket with added shoulder straps; others wear the 'lightened' M1947 uniform. The camouflage effect is simply sweat-staining. Just visible are metal rank bars on the shoulder straps of the adjudant behind the pony at right. Equipment is mixed, of US and French 'TAP' patterns, and one man has a British 1944 pattern water bottle.



worn with a 'lightened' jacket (*veste de combat allégée*).

Veste de combat mle 1947

This was derived from the US M1943 field jacket, but differed in particular details. It was made in a dark olive drab shade, of the material designated *croisé coton 320*, similar to that used for parachute jump uniforms.

There were two interior chest and two interior skirt pockets; all four had external single-point flaps – 140mm and 180mm wide respectively – with a separate tab under each, engaging with a single concealed button. The jacket had five large frontal buttons (often of wood at this date) concealed by a fly. The collar, with wide upper points, could be worn either open or closed – in practice, nearly always open. Closure was by a button, which thus became visible; or the collar could be turned up and secured round the neck by a tab on the inside left surface

and a button on the right. The waist had a rear internal draw-cord. The cuffs were adjusted by a tab passing forwards to engage with buttons at the front. There were permanent buttoned shoulder straps.

At the end of 1952 the skirt pockets were changed to a pleated patch design; the rectangular flap had a separate internal flap engaging with two concealed buttons. While one cannot be certain, it does not seem that this late-model jacket was issued in Indochina; it seems to have been generally reserved for issue in Metropolitan France,

while the 'lightened' version (below) was similarly reserved for issue to the Expeditionary Corps.

Veste de combat type allégé

A modification of the standard jacket reflecting the needs of troops in tropical postings, and particularly of those in Indochina, this was the jacket most frequently seen at Dien Bien Phu.

Of dark olive drab *croisé coton 320*, it had no skirt pockets and was shorter in the body than the standard type, allowing it to be worn tucked into the trousers if

wished. The front fastened with four buttons concealed by a fly; the collar button fixed to the body under the right hand collar point was retained, but the tab closure was deleted. The wrist tabs also disappeared, and the cuff acquired a 170mm rear vent fastened by two buttons placed vertically; the sleeves were thus easier to roll up.

In 1952 a doubled reinforcing patch was added to each shoulder. Jackets with and without these reinforcements were worn side by side in the units of early 1954.

Right:

20 November 1953: after Operation 'Castor', wounded paratroopers await evacuation. At least three are recognisable by their 'Big-eared caps' as men of 6^e BPC – note split neck-flap, right background. Left, note sole pattern of M1950 jump-boots, and (far left) 'hobnail' sole pattern of M1950/53 boots.



Below:

Several variations on the 8^e BPC cap can be seen, mostly with neck-flaps; note the design of that worn by the lieutenant, left, facing into the photo. Most of these paras wear the Denison smock characteristic of this battalion.



Pantalon de combat mle 1947

The same trousers, of olive drab *croisé canu* 320, were worn with both types of jacket.

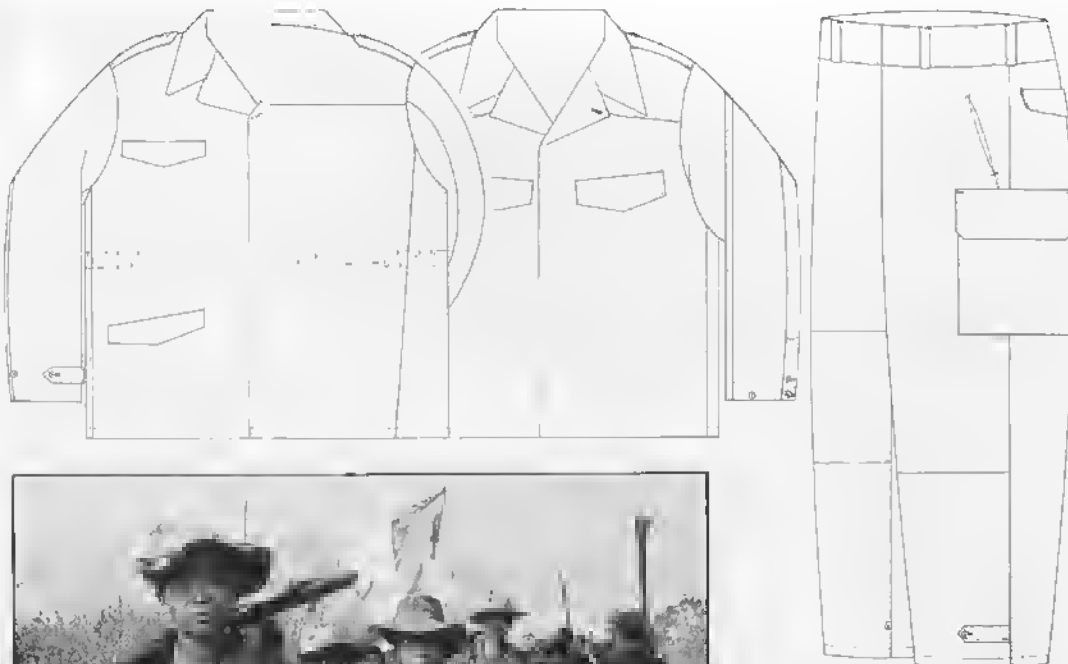
There was a large 'bellows' cargo pocket on the outside of each thigh, fastened by a rectangular flap 210mm wide, with a separate internal flap and two series of concealed buttons, allowing tight or loose fastening depending upon the load in the pocket. The pockets did not have external pleats, unlike the paratroopers' jump-trousers (see 'MI' No.20, p. 44). Two slash side pockets were provided, without any means of fastening. The two rear hip pockets were internal, with an external single-point flap fastened by a tab and concealed button. The knees were reinforced with a doubled patch of material 200mm high. These reinforcements, the absence of cargo pocket pleats, and the absence of visible pocket fastenings are the main identification points between these trousers and paratroop issue equivalents when studying photos.

In the relevant period the waistband had no visible buttons. During 1954 a modification put two visible buttons on to the front of the waist, as on the paratroopers' *pantalon de saut* mle 1947/52. (In 1959 a final modification reduced these to a single button.) The ankles were tightened by buttoning tabs passing forwards round the outer surfaces to engage in one of two optional positions.

Camouflage clothing

The *tenue de combat* mle 1947 was also manufactured in camouflage material, of the pattern first used for parachute jump-uniforms issued in Metropolitan France. It was issued to some parachute units in France in 1952; it does not seem to have been issued to troops in Indochina, but may have appeared there on an individual basis.

The *veste type allégé* (1952 model, with shoulder reinforcement) and the *pantalon de combat* mle 1947 were



Above:

Tenue de combat mle. 1947; and veste de combat allégé mle. 1952. (Drawings by Christa Hook)

Left:

Men of one of the Thai battalions enter DBP, late 1953. They wear issue bush-hats and M1947 fatigues, and only their size distinguishes them from the appearance of French troops.

Below:

Operation 'Mauvaise', October-November 1953: a para of 11^e RCP wearing US camouflage uniform (replaced by French shortly before 'Caster') and the small-brimmed bush-hat made of US camouflage material which was made up for this battalion.

manufactured in the camouflage patterns normally seen on mle 1947/52 parachute jump-uniforms (see 'MI' No.20, pp.38-45). These were issued in Indochina, apparently late in the war, as evidenced by photos of some parachute units parading there on 14 July 1954. Another photo, showing a para of 3^e BPVN in January 1954 during operations near Seno in Laos, features a camouflaged example of the *pantalon de combat* mle 1947. It is thus possible, though impossible to confirm, that some units had received the camouflaged version of this uniform by the time of Dien Bien Phu.

It does not seem, however, that any non-airborne units

had received it, if we may believe an extract from *Enseignements de la guerre d'Indochine*, published by the C-in-C Far East at the end of the war. The editor of this extract complains that non-airborne troops had not received camouflage uniforms, and that the enemy's ability to distinguish between units on mixed operations afforded him valuable intelligence.

Rank insignia

The display of rank insignia varied considerably between units and individuals, but some generalisations are possible.

By regulation, *adjudants* and officers wore their rank stripes either as looped metal bars or as lace-on-cloth





Paras of 8^e BPC, with a Viet prisoner during Operation 'Brachet', September 1953. The unit's characteristic caps are made here both from US and British camouflage material, and none of these examples have neck-flaps. The left hand man shows the use of the two small 'cigarette pockets' on the cap. The 'H' dagger (right) was not normal issue in the French Army . . .

loops, around the shoulder straps of jackets and shirts. Ranks from *soldat de 1^{re} classe* to *sergent-major* were to wear their point-up chevrons sewn to each upper sleeve, with the branch patch (*écusson d'arme*) on the left sleeve. In practice insignia were displayed in a number of ways, where they were displayed at all.

Officers and *adjudants* often wore a single insignia fixed to the chest, either between front edge and pocket or straddling the front closure. These were usually the cloth shoulder strap slides, either fixed with pins or sewn; but were sometimes metal bars, sewn round at the ends.

NCOs often wore a single chevron display with or without the branch patch, all mounted together on a cloth backing in the former case. A large pin on the back allowed these to be removed easily; but some employed hooks-

and-eyes, press-studs, or even temporary sewn attachments at each point. These insignia were usually worn either on the left sleeve, or on the left breast pocket.

Markings

While we have been at some pains in this series to describe in detail the differences in cut, fastening, number of buttons, camouflage patterns, etc., which assist the collector to identify the date of a particular piece, markings, where present, are also helpful. For the period in question all markings should have been stamped in black (or white, where the background was black) on the inside of the garment. They should normally consist of the manufacturer's mark; the size, in two digits; the mark 'Armée' with a date of purchase, in a rectangle; and the mark recording the taking on charge by the *Intendance* (Commissariat), with date, in an oval. White labels sewn inside garments and recording sizes did not appear until 1955.

UNDRESS HEADGEAR

The undress headgear – in the French term, *coiffure de repos* –

for all branches of service was normally the standard issue bush-hat (when the helmet was not worn). Nevertheless, officers and junior leaders frequently wore the sidecap of their branch; *légionnaires* frequently wore the *képi* or the beret; North African troops wore their turbans, and paratroopers their berets or different unit-specific headgear – all this leading to a considerable diversity of headgear worn side-by-side.

The M1949 bush-hat

This was copied in general outline from the felt British and Dominion issue worn at the beginning of the Indo-China War; but was made in a drill material designated *sergé coton* 290, usually of pale sand-khaki colour but sometimes of dark khaki. All surfaces were covered with lines of stitching at 4mm intervals, to stiffen the cotton and its lining. The right side of the brim could be fixed to the crown by a press-stud; and two metal ventilation eyelets were mounted in each side of the crown. A chinstrap in the same cotton was permanently fixed to the inside of each side of the crown; its adjustment-loop system was

Kevin Lyles' reconstructions opposite illustrate:

(1) Lt.Col. André Lalande, commanding III/3^e REI and strongpoint 'Isabelle', from a photo taken early in 1954. He wears the Foreign Legion officer's 'dark blue' (black) and red *képi* with the Legion seven-flamed gold grenade badge and five rank braids (gold-silver-gold-silver-gold). Over his M1948 sand-khaki shirt he wears a very faded example of the M1947 fatigue jacket; his rank is repeated on shoulder strap slides, and the 3^e REI regimental badge is pinned direct to the right breast. M1947 trousers, unfaded, are worn loose over laced black ankle boots.

(2) Lt. Paul Brunbrouck, commanding 4^e Batterie, II/4^e RAC. This Colonial Artillery officer distinguished himself on the night of 30 March, on 'Dominique 3' his four 105mm tubes fired over open sights to stem mass attacks by Viet Minh Rgt. 102 (308th Division), probably saving the entire camp from a fatal penetration. He wears the Colonial style sidecap in black piped red, with two gold rank braids en chevron, and the gilt metal Colonial anchor badge.

(3) Lt.Col. Jules Gaucher, commanding the Legion's 13^e DBLE and the central sector defences, killed by a shell which destroyed his CP on 13 March. He wears the M1947 fatigue jacket in the 'lightened' version, with shoulder ranking, and a fobbed regimental badge; a traditional white officer's *chèche* scarf; and the same *képi* as Lalande, here showing the top surface. He would wear the M1947 fatigue trousers, and probably rubber and canvas patauga patrol boots.

(4) *Soldat de 1^{re} classe*, 13^e DBLE. From a group photo taken in December 1953; most of the group wear M1947 'lightened' jackets and M1947 trousers, pataugas or M1917 ankle boots, and M1903/14 belts. This man wears the M1943 US herringbone wiff fatigue jacket, here very faded; a number of these were still to be seen in 1954. Note the canvas M1945 gaiters, modelled on the British equivalent but with only a top fastening strap, an internal metal hook engaging with a leather pocket at the bottom. The khaki beret, of the 'Mugnot Line' type produced for French fortress regiments in the 1930s, reflects the 13^e's regimental tradition: they wore khaki berets, pulled right, from the Narvik campaign of 1940 until well into the Algerian War (whenver they could get stocks). Some men in the group photo wear the metal regimental badge (possibly in a smaller form than worn on the right breast) in the beret; at least one has a cuff rank stripe, in green on khaki, sewn to the left front as here.



(1) Lt. Col. André Lalande,
3^e REI



(2) Lt. Paul Brunbrouck,
4^e RAC

(3) Lt. Col. Jules Gaucher,
13^e DBLE



(4) Soldat de 1^{ère} cl., 13^e DBLE



rudimentary, and most troops shortened the strap to taste by knotting it. Apart from some slightly varying examples locally made by the Commissariat in the Far East, this design was unchanged until well into the 1960s; slight differences may be seen among examples privately acquired by soldiers from local makers.

The bush-hat was the most commonly seen headgear at Dien Bien Phu among both non-airborne units, and those

airborne units which had not had their own headgear made up: i.e. the two BEPs, the BPVNs, and the support and service units.

Sidecaps

In most units officers and NCOs, particularly among unit staff personnel, usually replaced the bush-hat with the sidecap (*bouquet de police*) of the relevant branch of service as an identification.

This sidecap was in theory the rule 1946, copied from the

US Army model, for Metropolitan troops. In practice very many personnel had tailors make up for them caps of a more becoming outline, known as 'bananas'. These had rayonne linings of various colours, and leather sweatbands; the regulation caps were unlined, and had

cloth + sweatbands marked with the size, the manufacturer's logo and the Commissariat stamps.

Troops of Colonial units wore a rather differently shaped sidecap of more curved outline than the Metropolitan type, with an applied brass fouled anchor

Above:

After 'Castor', Gen. Cogny congratulates participants. He himself wears a black, nipped, non-regulation sidecap. At left, Gen. Gilles (see also 'MI' No. 18, p. 13) wears the red para beret. Cdt. Bigeard (see also 'MI' No. 3, p. 49) wears his famous cap, the neck-flap tucked inside. The Colonel on right wears what might be a pale blue Tirailleur sidecap, but seems to be in plain sand-khaki lightweight drill cloth.

Right:

Top, front to right of photo, the M1946 sidecap design. Centre, front to left, the Colonial sidecap, here a Colonial Artillery cap with lieutenant's rank lace and a (broken) brass anchor badge on left front. Bottom, a Foreign Legion sous-lieutenant's sidecap of the non-regulation 'banana' shape, with added grenade badge and small front buttons. 'Banana' caps lack the diagonal fold at front right found on M1946 and Colonial caps. (Photo: Tam Reeves)

Sidecap colours, principal branches of service present at Dien Bien Phu (body & turn-up/top gusset/piping):

Foreign Legion:
green/crimson/none*
Tirailleurs Algériens:
pale blue/yellow/none
Tirailleurs Marocains:
pale blue/pale green/pale green
Gomms: dark blue/pale blue/none
Colonial Infantry:
dark blue/dark blue/crimson**
Colonial Artillery:
black/black/scarlet**
Metropolitan Artillery:
black/scarlet/scarlet
Ingénieurs: black/black/scarlet
Signaux: dark blue/pale blue/pale blue
Train:
dark blue/dark green/dark green
Medical: dark blue/maroon/maroon
Matériel: dark blue/lead grey/none
Commissariat:
dark blue/ash grey/ash grey

* 'Crimson' is used here for the French term 'garance'.

** With brass anchor badge on left front.



badge on the left front. Individuals of other branches sometimes added, against regulations, their own branch insignia to the left fronts of their caps, these usually being cut from the branch patches worn on the collar or left sleeve of service dress: e.g., the gold embroidered seven-flame grenade of the Foreign Legion.

Rank was displayed by officers and *adjuvants* in the form of point-up chevrons of rank lace in the appropriate colours and numbers, on the front of the cap crown. NCOs wore diagonal bars of their rank lace (cut from sleeve chevrons) sewn to the left front. The addition of small buttons to the leading edge of the turn-up, though strictly forbidden, was popular with all ranks.

Unit headgear:

North African troops

Apart from the bush-hat these troops wore the *chèche* folded and wound as a turban, the details varying according to national origin. The *chèche*, traditionally worn as a desert head-scarf, was a length of very pale khaki cretonne measuring 2.5m by .85m. Its convenience had always been appreciated by Europeans, who usually wore it round the neck. The *Goumiers*, like the *Tirailleurs*, could also wear their particular headgear known as the *khiout*, made of knotted brown cords.

Foreign Legion

The bush-hat was generally worn, but was often replaced by the *képi* or the sidcap, particularly among junior leaders. The 13^e DBLE often wore a dark khaki beret, traditional in this unit since the Narvik campaign of 1940; this was a lined woollen 'basque' type identical to the Second World War 'Maginot line' style.

The tank squadron

The personnel of the tank squadron from 1^{er} RCC flown into Dien Bien Phu consistently wore a beret of sand-khaki drill material of the

type known as 'Gurkha', copied from the British tropical beret which had equipped the first troops of the Expeditionary Corps to arrive in 1945. The 1^{er} RCC beret usually had a leather rim sewn inside the cloth band.

Airborne units

Several parachute units had particular headgear made up to replace the bush-hat. On an individual basis the red beret (for Metropolitan and Colonial units alike), the camouflaged beret, and various models of camouflaged or single-colour caps and hats might be worn. Unit-specific headgear were made locally in semi-industrial conditions and were thus more uniform

than private-purchase items ordered by individuals.

The 8^e BPC

Three models of cap were seen within this unit at Dien Bien Phu, originating in those worn in the GCMA of which the battalion had formed part. The most recent and most common type was made in US camouflage material, with a squared visor and a rectangular neck-flap, and two ventilation eyelets in each side. The second model was made of British 'windproof' camouflage material; had no neck-flap, or usually any eyelets; and had a more rounded visor. Both these models had two small pockets in the front above the

visor; and an elastic in the back edge. The third, older model was still occasionally seen; it was similar to the second, but in US camouflage cloth, of a more rounded overall form, and without the front pockets. (Errata: In 'MI' No.20, p.45, the photo of Lt. Allousque, 8^e BPC, is wrongly captioned as showing a 'Bigeard' cap; it is, of course, the second model 8^e BPC cap.)

The 6^e BPC

In this unit Cdt. Bigeard had made his officers choose between different possible styles. They had unanimously chosen the cap which has since borne his name, to replace the 'fisherman's' style bush-hat worn at Lang Son. It differed from the 'baseball' caps of the 8^e BPC in being more like the Japanese field cap, with a more 'fore-and-aft' shape to the crown; and had a divided neck-flap forming two points. It was usually made in British 'windproof' camouflage fabric.

The 11^e RCP

The *Chasseurs Parachutistes* had adopted a bush-type hat, but with a smaller and more floppy brim than the issue type; it had neither chinstrap nor press-stud, and only the brim was stitched at 4mm intervals. It was always made from US camouflage fabric.

MI

To be continued: Part 4 will describe and illustrate personal equipment.

Above:

Details from a photo published full length in 'MI' No.20, showing two paratroop NCOs at Dien Bien Phu. One wears a cap of the earliest 8^e BPC style, in US camouflage; the other, a beret made from the same material, often worn in units of the Airborne Groups which had not adopted a specific headgear, such as staff and services.

Left:

Gia Loc, December 1953: *Tirailleurs Marocains* wearing the *chèche* rolled as a turban. Arrangement varied with national origin: Algerian units usually wore it over the ears, and here it is worn high on the head and coming to a frontal point. 'TAP' webbing equipment is worn with M1947 *saïgnes*.











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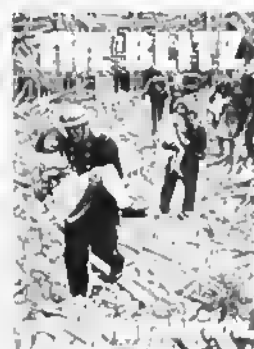
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